DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 463 081	PS 030 223

AUTHOR	Kroenke, Lillian DeVault, Ed.
TITLE	Infants and Toddlers, 2001-2002.
PUB DATE	2002-00-00
NOTE	82p.; Published quarterly. For 2000-2001 issues, see ED 450 906.
AVAILABLE FROM	Infants and Toddlers, P.O. Box 146, Placitas, NM 87043 (one-year subscription, $25. Tel: 505-291-8022; Fax: 505-291-1252.
PUB TYPE	Collected Works - Serials (022)
JOURNAL CIT	Infants and Toddlers; v5 n1-4 Spr-Win 2001-02
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Caregiver Child Relationship; Childhood Needs; Educational Environment; Foreign Countries; Infant Behavior; Infant Care; *Infants; Learning Activities; Mass Media; *Montessori Method; Outdoor Education; Periodicals; Piagetian Theory; Preschool Education; Program Descriptions; *Toddlers; Toilet Training; Violence; War
IDENTIFIERS	Italy; Montessori (Maria); *Montessori Preschools; Sense of Community; Spiritual Development; Spiritual Experiences

ABSTRACT

This document is comprised of the 2001-2002 issues of a quarterly journal for teachers and parents of children in Montessori infant and toddler programs. The spring 2001 issue presents articles on the history of infant and toddler programs in Italy and how to fulfill infant needs in Montessori child care, and on learning activities in the kitchen for infants and toddlers. The summer 2001 issues includes articles on diapering and toileting, and on discovering the natural environment. The fall 2001 issue contains articles on Piagetian theory and on protecting young children from frightening media representations of war and violence; also included is a photo story on a Montessori infant care environment. The winter 2002 issue focuses on developing a sense of community with infants and toddlers and on the spiritual development of adults as an essential component in the Montessori approach to education. Regular features include "Ask Ginny," an advice column, as well as editorials and job announcements. (KB)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 463 081

Infants and Toddlers
v5, n1-4, Spr 2001-Win 2002.

Lillian D. Kroenke, Editor

Infant and Toddlers
Albuquerque, NM

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Lillian Kroenke

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

PS 030223

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Infants and Toddlers

VOLUME 5, NUMBER 1

SPRING 2001

PS 030223

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Become a CMTE/NY Infant and Toddler Specialist!

- Deepen your appreciation of the needs of children from birth to three.
- Develop skills to observe, understand and respect infants and toddlers.
- Discover the joy, satisfaction and profound value of assisting the very young in their healthy growth and development.

The CMTE/NY Montessori Infant and Toddler Program is professional training for people working with children from birth to thirty-six months of age. The first program in the United States to offer Infant and Toddler Montessori Certification, CMTE/NY provides an in-depth study in Infant and Toddler Montessori education combined with the most current scientific and psychological research available.

The first three years of life affect a child's ability to thrive and be; self esteem, the ability to form attachments and the establishment of basic trust are all central to this period. The importance of these first years places a great responsibility on the adults in the child's world. Parents and child care providers should be informed, knowledgeable, and well-qualified to assist in this crucial period of physical, emotional and cognitive development.

CMTE/NY's Infant and Toddler Program teaches how to create beautiful, safe and developmentally appropriate learning environments. The program will give you the skills needed to provide the best quality care for infants and toddlers, as well as enrich your own life with a deeper understanding of this remarkable stage of life.

Classes are held at the CMTE/NY summer institute in New Rochelle, New York. Year-round weekend classes are held in Adrian, Michigan. Observations are held at CMTE/NY's model child care center, the Montessori Children's Center at Burke in White Plains, New York and at St. Joseph Academy in Adrian, Michigan. Call us for information and a brochure.

Our CMTE/NY Infant and Toddler Care video is now available. Send $40.00 to order or call for your copy today.

CMTE/NY **CALL: 914-948-2501**

785 Mamaroneck Avenue ❦ White Plains, New York 10605

Vol. 5, No. 1

Infants and Toddlers

Published 4 times a year.

The opinions expressed in *Infants and Toddlers* editorials, columns, and features are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the position of the magazine. Acceptance of advertising does not represent endorsement of any product or service.

Requests for permission to reprint materials from *Infants and Toddlers* in another form (e.g. book, newsletter, journal) should be sent in writing to Infants and Toddlers. Permission to reprint is not required if you want to make copies to share with parents, teacher, or students; for library reserve; or for personal use.

Our copyright notice must appear with each copy you make: Copyright 1997 by Infants and Toddlers. All rights reserved.

Send all address changes and inquires about subscriptions to Infants and Toddlers
PO Box 146
Placitas, NM 87043

Address all advertising inquiries and editorial correspondence to the editor:
Lillian DeVault Kroenke
PO Box 146
Placitas, NM 87043
Manuscript and photograph guidelines are available on request.

Printed by
Infants and Toddlers
Elanbe Publishing Services
PO Box 146
Placitas, NM 87043
Phone: (505) 291-8022
Fax: (505) 291-1252

POSTMASTER:
Send address changes to
Infants and Toddlers
PO Box 146
Placitas, NM 87043

All photos were provided by the authors.

Infants and Toddlers

FEATURES

5 **Monteseori Infant Care**
by Virginia Varga

9 **Infants and Toddlers in the Kitchen**
by Kathy O'Reilly

DEPARTMENTS

4 **Editorial**
Little Gems

4 **Ask Ginny**
What do you think about having infants and toddlers together in a large group?

Editor: Lillian DeVault Kroenke

Editorial Advisory Board:
Maria Gravel
Carole Korngold
Susan Tracy
Rita Messineo
David Shelton-Dodge
Virginia Varga

Editorial

Little Gems

A little reflection as we begin our fifth year of publication. As some of you know, I earned my Montessori certification for three-to-six almost forty years ago. Way back when I started to teach, I did have an orientation program for the young two and a half to three children preparing to enter the regular pre-primary class.

Without formal infant/toddler education, I helped raise four children. Now I have ten grandchildren to work and play with. Over the years, both my husband and I, in our respective careers, have been very active writing and publishing on many different subjects and in many different areas. So *Infants and Toddlers* seemed a natural for my "retirement" work. Bill is also an integral part of this work as our graphics and computer expert—and a diligent editor.

We have been learning along with you about how to interact with, respect and enjoy these very young children. Oh, how we both wish we had known as much when our own children were born. So much more is known today, both scientifically and in practice. This makes us especially sensitive to the importance of helping educate the young parents today who struggle to provide the best experience they can for their progeny.

I often find myself, when I am telling others about *Infants and Toddlers*, that some of the information seems familiar, logical or sensible. But—hidden within each article there are little gems. Sometimes they are little stories about personal teaching experiences. Sometimes they are pieces of scientific fact about child development or about human behavior. Sometimes there are tips about helping or teaching. Sometimes there is a sense of our spiritual being. But each is, in Montessori terms, a point of consciousness, awakening our awareness of the special uniqueness of mankind and our place in the universe.

Read on, friends. From the collective knowledge and experience of our contributors, we are sharing a whole new insight and understanding of our human potential.

Lillian DeVault Kroenke

Ask Ginny...

by Ginny Varga

Q What do you think about having infants and toddlers together in a large group?

A I generally recommend that one should not have infants and toddlers together in a large group because of the total stimulation coming in to them. At this early age, young children are not able to discrimminate stimulation, focusing on some of it and ignoring the rest. They take it all in.

Even if you have more adults than are required by law, they are adding to the stimulation simply because they are there.

There are, however, ways to design your environment so that you can have a larger number of children in a given space but in smaller groupings. You can arrange the shelving so that the children are not receiving stimulation from fifteen or twenty people.

I am doing this right now and it works. This year, for the first time, I am experimenting with this arrangement, not exactly by choice. The building for one of our programs was torn down.

As you know, little children become attached to the caregivers in the infant room. The parents did not want us to discontinue our infant program since the children had bonded with the teachers. So I presently have infants in the same larger room with toddlers.

We generally think of infants as being from whatever age you take them in up to approxiately seventeen or eighteen months. Toddlers are about eighteen months to three years in another group.

You could have both the infants and the toddlers in the same open space if you partition off areas of the room. You can do this nicely.

The most important thing that we are trying to do is provide consistency of care and consistency of the environment.

For instance, you can have the non-mobile babies in one area and the mobile babies in another. When you split them up like that, it is easier for the adult and easier to set up a specific environment. But, we don't believe it's good to have many changes of adults because this weakens their relationships with the babies.

When the children are in the same room—and there is some interchange over a period of time, you are providing another way of meeting the needs of the infant.

continued to page 18

For future issues, please direct your questions to:

[redacted]

Montessori Infant Care

by Virginia Varga

As I focus mainly on infants and infant care, I have several goals to accomplish. First of all, I'd like to review very briefly the history of infants and toddlers programs as they began in Italy.

Secondly, I would like to point out the importance of understanding our relationship to the mother and the child.

Then, I would like to emphasize the difference between Montessori's philosophy of infant care and the more traditional views of infant child care.

I will also review the important needs of the infant and how the experience of having these needs met might affect their developing self-identity and personality.

Next, I would like to speak about how we should react and respond when we are fulfilling the infant's needs in Montessori child care. And last, but not least, what I call "The Reality." This includes the difficulties inherent in hiring and educating adult caregivers who can maintain the energy, the self-discipline and the focus to continually respond to infants with the respect that is each child's right.

I. Assistants to Infancy

Adele Costa Gnocci was a student of Maria Montessori. As Dr. Montessori talked about the needs of infants and the care that should be available to them, Adele became very interested in infants and wanted to develop a program to carry out Dr. Montessori's thinking and insights into the care of infants.

It was she who began the training program in Rome for Assistants to Infancy, the Italian term given to those who took the training and who worked with infants. One of the main goals of this training was to ease the transition from birth to our world for the infant, being critical not only of how infants were brought into the world but also how they were treated right from the very beginning.

The same group of Montessorians that began the training program for Assistants to Infancy, also began what was called the Birth Center. (Varga, 1997)

In this country, we have never come up with a good name for those who care for infants. Assistants to Infancy make sense to me. But that terminology would probably once again be one of those difficult concepts we use to communicate to the general public our purpose and what it is that we do. So, we still call ourselves infant teachers or infant educators which is as unMontessori a title as you can get.

The original purpose of this work was to ease the delivery and the acceptance of the infant into this world. Psychologically, we now know that those first experiences of the newborn baby are extremely important. We must heighten our awareness of our relationship with infants—and the parents—not just with the infants.

This is especially important because if you take in young infants, let's say, from six weeks to four or five months, you are dealing with just one person psychologically. The mother and the child are one. You are dealing with the bonded couple. This is why I say that the relationship you develop, not only with the child, but also with the mother, is critical. We could also say, not only with the mother, but also with the child, because they are basically the same at this early time.

> **...the relationship you develop, not only with the child, but also with the mother, is critical... because they are basically the same at this early time. They are a bonded couple.**

continued to page 6

MONTESSORI INFANT CARE

continued from page 5

II. Our Relationship with the Parent and the Child

Recognize the Mother's Knowledge

In my experience with infant caregivers, one of the difficulties I see—especially as we have more training and understanding of development—is to respect the mother's knowledge of her own child. Very often we think that we know more than the mother, especially a first time mother. As a caregiver who may have raised several children of our own, we have to remember always that even if the child comes to us at six weeks, that child has been with the mother most likely for nine months. The mother does have a sense, an intuition, of who this child is and what the child needs.

Probably one of the most important things we need to do is respect her knowledge of her child and her relationship with the child. We need to point out to the mother at various times, when it's appropriate, how well she knows her child. Most often it is not a lack of her understanding that we observe. It is more likely her lack of confidence. Very often the new mother doesn't have confidence that she knows what is right for her child. Often when she observes a caregiver, she may begin to think that the caregiver knows more than she does. That thinking may begin to affect the mother's confidence, awareness and knowledge of her own child. This, in turn, could have a very deep effect on the mother's relationship with her child.

> **We need point out to the mother at various times, when it's appropriate, how well she knows her child. Most often it is not a lack of her understanding that we observe. It is more likely her lack of confidence. Very often the new mother doesn't have confidence that she does know what is right for her child.**

Establishing Trust with the Family

Another thing I have found to be very important is that—and I had to experience this myself—our most important goal is to establish trust with the mother and the child.

Very often, the new mother is experiencing both anger and grief about going back to work and leaving her child. Very often her response at the end of the day when she picks up her child is a reflection of her own emotions, which may include that anger and grief.

Initially, before trust is established and depending also on the age and stage of the mother's understanding, she can be highly critical of the care her child is given. If the caregivers do not understand this, they may become defensive and angry with the parents. I knew this, but when I actually experienced a mother's critical concern, it gave me a whole other insight. I must say that it was rather fun. It is always interesting when you know something and then you experience it. It becomes much easier not to get angry.

One day we lost a child's sock. We couldn't find it at the end of the day. This loss was caused by the people who were with the child earlier in the day. At the end of the day, I was one of the caregivers present. I didn't know where the earlier caregiver had placed the sock.

Well, you might have thought it was a major catastrophe! You might say, "Just a sock? That's not really that important. We'll find it tomorrow." But it can be very little, seemingly unimportant things, not important at all to you, that are very important at that time to the parent. Such little things can affect the relationship you are building to gain the trust of the parent. Believe me, we were very careful after that to know where each child's socks and shoes were.

Of course, because we believe that it is very important that the children have the greatest possibility of movement, we remove the shoes and socks everyday. We have a place for them and make sure that the right shoes and the right socks get back to the right child. It seems very simple and unimportant, but all those little details are very important to the parents.

Parents also want information at the end of the day. You might just say, "What can I tell them. It was just a regular day." But parents want to know the details of the regular day! So you have to have some way to give them some information. Very often the caregivers who meet the parents at the end of the day are not the people who were with the child during most of the day. Parents ask, "What did my child do today? And what did he learn?" This is reality. In Montessori infant care, you have to plan in order to give parents information about the child.

Recognize the Difficulty of Separation

Remember, most parents are really very heartsick that they have to leave their child after spending maybe six weeks or maybe as much as three months with them. It is very difficult to separate after that bonding process. Many mothers say, "I was really thinking about not going back to work!" Once they have the child, it is very difficult to leave.

I have observed that often times parents undergoing seperation appear to be demanding and difficult. It is very important not to take this attitude personally and to understand that the parents may be expressing their anger or grief about leaving their child.

The main role of the adult, then, is to acknowledge the parent's feelings and to acknowledge how difficult it must be for them to leave the child. Their anxiety will gradually subside as they develop a sense of trust.

These parents have real concerns about leaving—and also about their child establishing a close relationship with caregivers. Often times a parent can begin to feel competitive, especially when the mother comes to pick up her child and her child begins to cry and clings to the caregiver. How would that make you feel if you were the mother?

As the caregiver, you have to be very careful not to take pleasure indicating how much a child loves you as the parent arrives. This is not the time. Being aware of the ego involvement of the caregiver is extremely important. Always be aware! In fact, to prevent this happening, plan the setting so that the child is ready to greet the parent.

These are all very fine points, little details, that are extremely important for the parents to be able to establish trust in you and your relationship with their child.

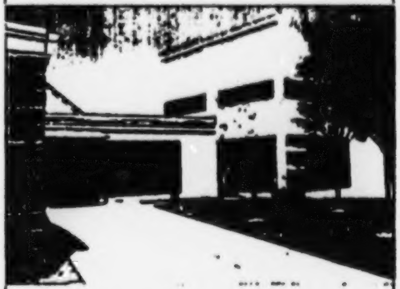
Remember the Child's Sense of Order

I have to tell you an interesting story. There was a father who would pop in every now and then unannounced to see his infant daughter. He would say, "I'll give her her bottle," and sit down in a chair. Actually, it was beautiful to see this father gazing at his child. He looked like a male Madonna.

We found out later that people were saying to him, "Oh, your baby is in child care. Do you know the awful things that can happen?" So he would leave his work because he was afraid something might be happening to his child. He came to make sure that his child was safe

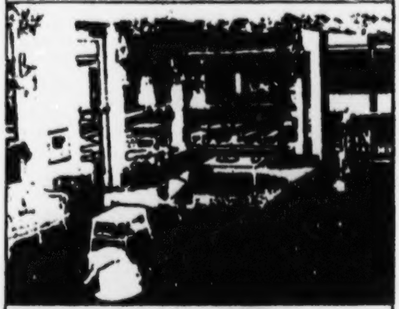
continued to page 8

Princeton
Center
Teacher
Education



AMS Certification Programs
- Infant and Toddler
- Early Childhood
- Elementary

MACTE Accredited



PCTE...the Inside Track
487 Cherry Valley Road
Princeton, New Jersey 08540
609-924-4594 • Fax: 609-924-2216

The Learning TOWER

The Learning Tower® is a child's special place to observe, participate and create! A step stool, desk, puppet theater, fort - your child's imagination is the limit. Strong Baltic birch with choice of non-toxic color finishes including natural. Will be enjoyed for generations. For ages 2-6.

Ask for a free Brochure!

Order Direct at
1-800-704-9058

Dr. Toy's
100 BEST
Children's Products

Montessori
Infants and Toddlers Videos

Infant/Toddler Environments:
Actual video of three different classroom environments. Emphasis is placed on aesthetic and well developed environments. *Approx. 30 min. $50.00*

Infant/Toddler Activities
Actual video of children interacting with their environments. Explore new ideas. Watch how children respond. *Approx. 35 min. $40.00*

Montessori Infant and Toddler Care
Filmed at several programs around the country. Emphasizes Montessori theory and practice. *Approx. 9 min. $40.00*

A Helping Hand
Actual video of ways adults can assist children. Give just the necessary help. *$20.00*

Each video contains a brief description of its contents.

Send your order with payment to:
Infants and Toddlers Videos
c/o Virginia Varga
6106 Frederick Road
Dayton, OH 45414

MONTESSORI INFANT CARE

continued from page 7

and being cared for. It took us a while to realize that he had this additional motive. He was coming to check up on us as well. I do want to say that he had a very close relationship with his child.

One day when spring came and the baby was walking, her father came to pick her up. She clung to us and cried, acting as if she was afraid of her father. She wouldn't go to him. This happened about three days in a row. He was very upset.

Remember, in Montessori's writing she talks about the child's sense of order. As an example, she described how a young child cried when her mother held her coat over her arm and was not wearing it. It was funny how I thought about that. Spring had come and the father came to pick his daughter up wearing sunglasses. That night it hit me. "Oh, sunglasses. That's not my father!" She actually acted afraid of him.

About the third day, I called the home in the evening to tell the father not to wear his sunglasses when he came to pick her up. He wasn't home so I talked with his wife. The wife said, "Okay, but he should have known better than that." I don't know why, but she did.

The next day, he came without his sunglasses. After three days of screaming when we just had to force her into his arms, she went willingly to him. And after that, it was okay.

It was exciting for me to pick up on just that little thing. These are the kinds of things that also help parents to establish trust in you and in your programs.

III. Differences Between Montessori Philosophy and More Traditional Views

We always say that the main tool of the Montessori method is the prepared environment. Within that prepared environment, we include the prepared adult. You can see a video. You can go visit an infant program. You can look at the furniture and the activities. Montessori teachers always want to see what you have on the shelf—what you have for the children to manipulate. But that is not really the most important part of an infant program.

The Exploratory Environment

Certainly, the most important part of the Montessori infant care environment is the adult caregivers. That is what you have to look at. It is the adult's attitudes and qualities that make the difference. However, the environment still needs to be prepared and constructed to support the infant's growth and independence. Especially when a baby can crawl, the emphasis should be on an exploratory environment. Now, forget the shelves. Forget all the things you purchase. An exploratory environment basically gives the child space, space to move about.

The Experience of Movement

In the Montessori prepared environment we are looking to give the child a rich experience of movement and so it also means you can't just have an empty room. An environment, however, can actually

continued to page 13

Infants and Toddlers in the Kitchen

By Kathy O'Reilly

The kitchen is often the hub of the family activities and even the youngest member of the family wants to join in. Infants and toddlers want, and need, to be near their parents. They enjoy the action and smells of the kitchen as they take part in the family's daily activities. Not only can you keep a close eye on the child as you work, but also you can provide your child with a stimulating environment that transmits the family's culture from one generation to the next.

> ***Not only can you keep a close eye on the child as you work, but also you can provide your child with a stimulating environment that transmits the family's culture from one generation to the next.***

Enriching Vocabulary

Working in the kitchen provides almost unlimited opportunities to enrich your child's vocabulary as you provide concrete experiences that give an even greater depth of understanding to their meanings. Just think of the nouns that are used to name the large variety of tools and ingredients used in the kitchen!

When you use these, you can come up with numerous verbs and adjectives. For example, stirring the liquid ingredients with the metal whisk in the glass mixing bowl, or slicing the long, round cucumber with the sharp, serrated knife.

Enriching Language Skills

Research such as the studies done by Janellen Huttten-locker, of the University of Chicago, show that the richer and more complex language we use with infants and toddlers, the greater their language acquisiton. (Picchetti, 1999)

Be sure to use complex sentences as you describe what you are doing. For example, "This spice called cinnamon has a wonderful smell and flavor, but it is very concentrated so we only use a small amount in our pumpkin pie." Ms. Huttenlocker found that most children who were spoken to in this way were using complex sentences when they were just two years old! (Picchetti, 1999)

Enriching the Sense of Smell

One grandmother began letting her grandson smell spices that she used each day and told him their names from the time he was an infant in a seat on the kitchen counter. When he began talking, he would notice smells and say, "That smells like cinnamon," for example.

Kathy O'Reilly, author of **Cooking with Children Can Be Easy: The Complete System for Single Portion Recipes** is a certified Montessori teacher who has been cooking in the classroom for 25 years.

Her cookbook is being used in a variety of programs in more than 45 states and 11 foreign countries. A new No-Heat edition is now available.

She teaches at The Montessori School of Huntsville, AL, and will begin work on a Toddler cookbook this summer. For more information, Kathy can be reached at 1304 McCullough Avenue, Hunstville, AL 35801 or call her at (256) 534-2155.

Email: kocooks@hiwaay.neet

Beginning about six months of age, children need to have their own cabinet or drawer of safe kitchen toys, such as plastic stacking bowls, measuring cups, measuring spoons, wooden spoons, etc.

Children are fascinated with opening and closing doors and drawers. As they explore and experiment, they are learning about the physical world and developing spatial relationships which lay the foundation for understanding mathematical concepts.

continued on page 10

INFANTS AND TODDLERS IN THE KITCHEN

continued from page 9

A Child-Sized Table

When a child is able to sit up alone and you have the room available, please consider providing a child-sized table and chair in the kitchen for your child. This gives your child a real sense of independence. At school we show children how to lift the chair in before they take their work off the table. That way they, and other people, do not trip over the chair.

Early Food Preparation

About eighteen months of age, children love to stir and pour. They also enjoy placing cheese on bread for a sandwich or grated cheese on their own pizza. They enjoy kneading and cutting out biscuit dough, spooning and sifting.

The one-cup crank sifters are easier for children to use than the sifter with the handle that must be squeezed. The crank handles are easier for small hands and they last much longer.

Slooow Down Your Movements

When you demonstrate to your child how to do something, do so at about half the speed your child would need to do it. You may feel a little self-conscious at first, but this allows your child sufficient time to see exactly what is being done. It also encourages your child to do things slowly and carefully.

Helpful Assistance

If the child needs a little assistance when learning how to use a tool, let the child hold the tool. Stand behind and put your hands on top of the child's to guide gently. This way muscles begin to develop a motor memory and the child feels as if she is still doing it "all by myself."

Two-year-olds can scrub fruits and vegetables. Put a bath towel on the floor with a dish basin and a vegetable brush. Fill the basin with one inch of water and show the child how to scrub.

Water Works

When there are not any fruits or vegetables to scrub, you can use the bath towel and basin for other activities that develop skills used in cooking. This can be as simple as pouring water from one small pitcher or cup to another. I have seen children two and a half do this for over 45 minutes! For added interest include a ladle, a spoon, a slotted spoon or a 1/4 cup measure.

Salads and Snacks

Between two and two and a half years of age, a child can tear lettuce for a salad and butter bread. You can cut a cucumber, banana or other soft fruit or vegetable in half lengthwise. Place the flat side on a cutting board so it does not roll around. Then let the child cut it with a plastic knife. Show the child the handle which is for holding and point out the serrated edge which is for cutting.

The pieces will be a variety of sizes, but remember it is the process that is important, not the end product.

Children also enjoy cutting a slice of bread or cheese into bite-size pieces for a snack. At school these activities are put on trays to help define the workspace and make it easy for the child to carry. You may want to consider this for home as well. Once again, the child's own table and chair comes in very handy for these activities.

Starting Good Eating Habits

This is also the time to start helping children develop good eating habits by allowing your child to taste a variety of foods. Just a lick with the tongue is sufficient. Babies have many more taste buds than adults, so avoid very strong-flavored or spicy foods.

Allow your child to taste a variety of foods. Just a lick with the tongue is sufficient. Babies have many more taste buds than adults, so avoid very strong-flavored or spicy foods.

Foods with added sugar should also be avoided, especially chocolate as it can cause allergic reactions in some young children. Sugar-laden foods can also interfere with a child's natural ability to choose a well balanced diet.

Kitchen Games

When the plastic spice bottles are empty, they can be washed and used for playing and teething. Rattles can be made by adding rice or beans to the bottle and then gluing the lids closed. Later you can place a large metal or plastic mixing bowl inside the basin and fill it with more water. Then you can add larger measuring cups or a variety of toddler-proof items that sink or float. Large plastic tongs or slotted spoons are great for retrieving the sink and float items. Older toddlers can use basters to transfer water from one container to another.

Woops! Handling Spills

Occasional spills are going to happen, even with adults. Keep a sponge, paper towels or rags handy for cleaning up liquids and a whisk broom with a dust pan for cleaning up dry ingredients. In the toddler and preprimary Montessori classrooms, these are some of the first skills that children learn. Spills are taken in stride and children quickly learn to clean up after themselves. And you can learn to keep your sense of humor!

continued on page 12

INFANTS AND TODDLERS IN THE KITCHEN

continued from page 11

A Word of Caution!

A word of caution is in order. As with any activity, do not leave a child unattended. Gently, but firmly, set limits. For example, the water stays in the basin and is not poured on the floor. The knife is used safely and is only to cut food.

Enjoying the Fruits of Your Efforts

You may one day find yourself in the position of the parents of one of my former students. By the age of nine, their daughter was pouring over cooking magazines, choosing recipes, making shopping lists and cooking complete dinners for them—including cornish game hens.

Enjoy the time in the kitchen with your infant or toddler. It is the beginning of a lifetime of wonderful memories. The skills your child develops will be used throughout life and just might be used to surprise you with a home-cooked meal one day!

Reference

Picchetti, Patricia, Sensory Awareness in Infants—Part 1, Infants and Toddlers, Vol. 3, No 2, Summer 1999.

Resource for a one-cup sifter:

Montessori Services, 836 Cleveland Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95401. Phone toll free 877-975-3003.

Moving? Changing your name or address?

Be sure to let us know as soon as possible. We don't want you to miss a single issue of your subscription. *Send any change to:*

Infants and Toddlers
PO Box 146
Placitas, NM 87043
or call 505-291-8022
fax 505-291-1252

○ ○

Job Opportunities

Classified ads contain a maximum of 36 characters per line including each space between words. Ads must be placed by written correspondence to

Infants and Toddlers
PO Box 146
Placitas, NM 87043

and must be accompanied by payment of $8.00 per line. This price does not include a copy of the journal. Submit by July 1 for the Summer 2001 edition.

Montessori Teacher Education Center of Northern California

INFANT TODDLER TRAINING

- ☐ Academic Year & Summer Course Schedule
- ☐ AMS Trained Staff
- ☐ Small Class Size
- ☐ On-site Environments

"Unless we adults are enlightened as to the way the child's mind develops, we are likely to become the greatest obstacle to his progress." Maria Montessori

Phone: 925-455-8021
Address: 460 North Livermore Avenue
Livermore, CA 94550
Website: www.montessoriteachereducation.org

Patricia Chambers, *Director of Training*

MONTESSORI INFANT CARE

continued from page 8

be cuttered with things and experiences for the child to creep over or crawl through for movement.

No Containers for Children

One of the differences between the Montessori environment and traditional environments is that we don't have a lot of things that contain children. We should not have walkers, playpens or anything that you can put children into, especially if they cannot get out by themselves. They should not be put into wind-up swings that are often found in more traditional child care facilities and in homes.

If you are going to have a baby, there is a whole list of things that you may have on your list for people to buy! Perhaps you also need a list of things people should not buy. Expectant mothers usually don't think about those things so they receive many kinds of containers as baby gifts.

Independence and Concentration

Our main goals are to develop independence and concentration. These are concepts you very seldom hear other people discuss. We want a child to follow his own interests. But, no matter what you have in the room, the movement and the development of independence can be restricted by the adults' attitudes and beliefs about children or their lack of information about the capabilities of children and what they can actually do.

Following the Individual Child's Needs

The Montessori environment should follow the individual child's need to eat, sleep, play and explore, rather than to attempt to condition the group to eat, sleep and be diapered at the same time. I think that is one of the main issues. Very often everybody has to be diapered by 10:30 am and everyone is supposed to sleep at the same time.

I've been very surprised to walk into what is supposed to be a Montessori infant room at about noon and find all the infants asleep. First of all, I thought, "How did they do this?" It's great for the adults because it give them some down time.

An infant gets the message that it is okay for me to have been born and to be here from the attitude of the persons who care for them.

When Montessori infant care is individualized, as it should be, very seldom do you have all the children asleep at the same time. So the teachers do not have that break that a toddler teacher often has when all the children are asleep at the same time, we hope. Then, they have some time to do other things. With infants, there is generally always someone awake.

IV. Meeting the Special Needs of Children

The Importance of Everyday Interactions

The reason why how we diaper a child or how we feed a child is so important is because of the number of repetitions of that experience. By the time a child is close to three, and is not toilet trained yet, think how many times someone has changed the child's diaper, how many times that child has experienced someone feeding him or her. That is what makes the difference.

The attitude of the person performing these tasks with the child helps or hinders the formation of each child's positive self-concept, the kind of person he or she is. Infants initially need to experience that it is okay for them to be here. They need to experience that at least by three months, if not sooner. An infant gets the message that it is okay for me to have been born and to be here from the attitude of the persons who care for him or her. The way the adults change the baby, the way they relate to the baby during that time, the patience they have, the care and feeding all give an infant permission to live, the permission to be.

continued to page 14

MONTESSORI INFANT CARE

continued from page 13

Participation Begins at Birth

In a Montessori infant program, the main goals are to provide the time for infants to participate in having their needs met. That's a big one. It sounds easy and simple, but it is not. It requires awareness and planning to provide the time for infants to participate in having their own needs met.

For example, Dr. Montessori in one of her writings mentions the fact that it's the child's job to care for his or her own body. So, when you are caring for infants, you should give them the time to do whatever they can do themselves.

This kind of infant participation begins at birth. If you work with mothers, and I hope you do, this is the kind of information that you can share with mothers. Infant participation starts with breast feeding, letting the baby suck the nipple in instead of putting the nipple into the child's mouth. Infants are born with the sucking reflex. They can do that.

We have to remember that which we end up calling independence, I'm calling participation. Everyday care can begin at birth. Adults have to know that and value the end result of the infant's participation. One of the difficulties we have is to find Montessori educated infant caregivers who can maintain a high energy and self-discipline over a period of years to see each child's care as a new beginning.

Permission to Explore the World

Children also need permission to explore and be curious. If you constantly put them into containers and direct them according to some kind of schedule that your licensing may require, you run into problems helping children to realize that it is okay to explore and to be curious once they begin to crawl.

Do you really think curiousity is important as a human trait? It's very important! It forms once a child begins to creep, crawl and explore the world. I want you to imagine in your mind an exploratory environment, not a Montessori 3-to-6 environment, not a toddler environment, just an exploratory environment.

There is nothing little twelve, thirteen, fourteen or fifteen-month olds like better than to have a faucet dripping with water. They will play for hours, exploring that water. Most people say, "Oh, doesn't it make a mess?" I think Montessori teachers also hate the mess. So, often we do not provide this kind of experience.

Children also need to squeeze a sponge. And to wash themselves. You should always be there, watching, observing because we care about safety. You can put a towel on the floor to absorb the water. You can wipe up the floor where you think it might be dangerous. The children know the floor can be wet so they walk carefully. You can give them a new sponge, for example, when one is full. The adult must watch carefully, but respect the children's concentration. When they lose interest, you can clean up after them.

Ginny Varga...

widely recognized as one of the leaders in the field of infant and toddler education, founded one of the first Montessori programs in the country at the Gloria Dei School, Dayton, OH following her AMI/AMS pre-primary training in 1961. Ginny has served as the Infant and Toddler Coordinator at the CMTE/NY since 1980, directing courses in New York and Hawaii.

Ginny has also been active at the national level as chair of the AMS Teacher's Section (1966-68), as a school consultant (since 1966), Regional Director of Consultation (1971-1973), a member of the AMS Teacher Education Committee and as a member of the AMS Board (1966-1977). For her many achievements, Ginny was chosen as the AMS Scholarship Committee's Living Legacy in 1993-94.

V. How Adults in Montessori Child Care Programs Should React and Respond When Fulfilling the Infant's Needs

Respecting the Child's Activity

We must respect the child's concentration, the child's interest, before our own desire. For children who are attending to everything, we need to wait to capture their attention. Very often the wait is only a few moments. But that kind of respect for the child's activity is very important.

Our emphasis in the Montessori environment on respect for the child's interest and our support of their concentration might be extremely important. Today many young children are put into large groups very early. This may impair their development of self-conficence and personal skills.

Getting Permission to Help

In Montessori and in Magda Gerber's work with the RIE method, we both say that the basis of our work is respect for the child. One of the ways we show our respect is that we talk to infants and tell them what we are going to do before we do it. This is another way our program is somewhat different from most traditional programs.

Magda Gerber has a wonderful little dialog as she calls it. The adult speaks to the child and then waits for the child's recognition, waits to see if the child looks. Then the adult states what she wants to do, "I'd like to change your diaper," for example. Then the adult waits for a few more minutes for the child to respond before picking up the child. This is done right from the very beginning of the child's care.

You might say that this is not necessary. Babies don't understand the language. They don't know what you are saying anyhow. But that is not the important part. Right from the beginning, we must respect the child. If the child just happens to be looking at something that is moving, like a mobile, you wait until the child stops looking and turns for a minute or maybe even hears you. You know, babies notice every sound. That is why you should be quiet when you approach them. When the child notices you, then you can

continued to page 16

San Francisco Bay Area Montessori Teacher Education Center

Five Week Summer
Intensive Year-Round Schedule
210 Academic Hours
540 Practicum Hours
Complete Infant and Toddler Manuals

American Montessori Society Affiliate
MACTE Accredited

Undergraduate and Graduate credit available
$2,000 Inclusive of Registration and Tuition

16492 Foothill Blvd
San Leandro, CA
94578-2107
Phone: 510.278.1115
www.MontessoriTEC-SF.com

MONTESSORI INFANT CARE

continued from page 15

speak. But if the child is interested in the mobile, for example, you shouldn't come up and into his or her face at that point and say, "I'd like to change your diaper now."

Analyze Movements and Observe

And how do you have to move? Slooowly! How slowly? Very slowly! Slower than we think we could ever move. That is also what makes caring for infants, from a Montessori view, difficult because how do we usually move? Fast! Our goal—to get something done, to be efficient—a very different goal form the infant's who doesn't even have a (conscious) goal.

As an infant caregiver, we have to analyze the movements and, just like the early childhood people, we have to be very observant. We can only be observant to see the child's interest in participating if we move slowly. If we are doing something very quickly, we don't even notice that the little hands and minds function more slowly.

The same thing happens when some teachers sing with toddlers. The teacher zips through songs and the children are still back on an earlier motion. By then the teacher is three phrases ahead. If you want young children to participate, you have to move very slowly. And that is difficult for adults because we know all the things that we need to do and want to do. Moving slowly is one of the things that we all have to work on.

The awareness of and respect for the infant to participate requires us to slow down. It's one of the things that makes Montessori care different from other kinds of tradtional care. It is basic in the Montessori concept to allow each child to move and learn at his or her own pace, not at ours.

And how do you have to move? Slooowly! How slowly? Very slowly! Slower than we think we could ever move. That is also what makes caring for infants, from a Montessori view, difficult.

Do Only the Difficult for the Child

Our guide is always to do the difficult part just as we do in all Montessori programs. Let's say, for example, that a tiny infant now has his or her feet up in the air and can see its feet. If you remove the heel of the sock, just the heel, and let it hang there, even if the child just swipes at it, it can fall off. Gradually, the baby will realize that it can grab the sock and pull it off.

Stimulation and Over Stimulation

I have often observed children in infant or toddler care, early childhood classes or whatever at an early age where there is much stimulation. I have often wondered if too much stimulation can actually be creating some of the difficulties in focus and concentration that we observe in children as they get older?

I am not going to give you my brain lecture here, but young children's central nervous system development is such that they are pretty much wide open to all stimuli. it takes some maturity and experience before they can begin to screen out some of the external stimuli and to focus on that which is important. Current brain research, confirms that it is important for children to receive stimulation. However, it also

Young children's central nervous system development is such that they are pretty much wide open to all stimuli. It takes some maturity and experience before they can begin to screen out some of the external stimuli and to focus on that which is important.

shows us that over stimulation can be harmful. So part of our task is to control, to a certain extent, the amount of stimulation that children get. That is also why we try to build some control into the design of the environment.

The Role of Adult Conversation

In my experience in infant care environments, I find that the adults talk a lot to one another. They don't do that in most cases in the early childhood environments that I have seen. The adults instead go about their business. But in the infant environments, I see adults getting an infant a bottle and talking to another adult about adult things while they are caring for a child—what you are going to have for dinner tonight, what you did last night, your dates and so on.

So it seems to me as if somehow that infant environments encourage adults to do a lot of talking. This happens, I suppose, because the infants are nonverbal. Much of what we do is care of the infant's body by feeding, diapering and so on. This continuous talking among caregivers seems to be a difficulty in Montessori infant care as well as in other traditional infant care programs. It's something that we really need to think about.

Attending to the Care of the Child

At this important stage of the child's creation and formation, it is important to remember that we are present to care for each infant. When getting an infant a bottle, the adult should be concentrating on and looking at that baby. The everyday experiences of diapering and feeding are probably the most important experiences that the child is receiving. They learn, by the way they are cared for, about the kind of person they are.

These repeated activities can become boring or mundane experiences from the adult's point of view. What do we hear most adults say? "Well, what do you do with an infant. You just change their diaper and feed them. What do you need to know? Anybody can diaper a baby. You don't need to take special training." It's that feeling that makes it difficult for those who care for infants to be respected.

VI. Hiring and Preparing Adults

The hardest age group to care for is really the twelve-to-eighteen month

continued to page 18

MONTESSORI SERVICES

We offer child-size, age-appropriate items for your child at home:

- Art
- Music
- Books
- Cooking
- Cleaning Up
- Woodworking
- Cooperative Games
- Nature & Gardening

Free Catalog

Toll Free: 1-877-975-3003
Ask for our Mini-Catalog
for Families.

Website: www.montessoriservices.com

A Resource for Families

MONTESSORI INFANT CARE

continued from page 17

age group. Some of the statistics I've read is that the largest turnover for teachers is with this age group. And, also, more children are injured in this age group because they are so curious and they are into everything. They are so active that their activity and exploration can be fatiguing for you even if you just sit in a chair and watch all day, let alone if you are trying to make sure that they don't get hurt. This is a very active age group, but it's also a very exciting age group to watch as they explore their world.

References

Varga, Virginia, *The History of Infant/Toddler Programs in the United States*, Infants and Toddlers, Vol 1, No 1.

Greenwald, Deborah, *Montessori and Resources for Infant Educarers (RIE) Part 1: RIE and The Pickler Institute*, Infants and Toddlers, Vol 4, No 2, and *Part 2: Similarities*, Infants and Toddlers, Vol 4, No 3.

ASK GINNY

continued from page 4

I have consulted with others who have also done this. Now, in this daily work that I am involved with, I can check out my own thinking on the subject.

It is working quite well. The infant teacher's own child has to be picked up by bus so she cannot come in until nine o'clock. The toddler teacher comes in earlier and cares for the one or two infants who come in early. She takes them into the larger toddler environment when she only has three or four toddlers.

Later when the other children come in, the infants go to their own environment. In this way, the infants already know their future toddler teacher and the larger environment that they are going to move into.

So, if you think these issues out, there is more than one way to solve the problem. Be sure to take into consideration certain basic principles and the continuity and consistency for the child which is hard to maintain in infant care programs with long hours.

Infants and Toddlers Subscription Form

Subscriber Information (Please Print):

Name ____________________

Address ____________________

____

City ____________ State ____ Zip ________

Phone ____________ Fax ____________

Send this form and payment to:
Infants and Toddlers
PO Box 146
Placitas, NM 87043

Regular Subscription:

____ 1 year (4 issues) $25.00 ______

____ 2 years (8 issues) $45.00 ______

Intern Subscription:

____ 1 year (4 issues) $20.00 ______

Course: ____________ Year: ______

Bulk Mail Subscription: (School Orders Only)

______ copies x $2.50 x 4 = $ ______

Order Total $ ______

Please start with issue: Vol____ No____

Bulk Order Example (schools only): to order 10 copies:
10 copies (10 copy min) x $2.50 x 4 issues = $100.00

Form of Payment:

___ Check ___ VISA ___ MC ___ Discover

Account# ________ ________ ________ ________

Expires: ______ / ______

Cardholder (Please Print):

____

Signature: ____________________

Montessori Education Center of the Rockies
Infant and Toddler Training

"It is we who must go at his pace."
Maria Montessori, *The Absorbent Mind*

Intensive Study
Six weeks summer training
210 academic hours, plus
1 mid-winter seminar
9 month, 400 hour internship

Highly Qualified Staff
All AMS Infant and Toddler trained
Extensive Infant and Toddler experience

Individual Attention
Small class size
Personal approach

Observation/Interaction Opportunities
Model on-site Toddler environment

Inclusive Price
Tuition includes cost of academic,
practicum and seminar phases.
No extra fees for handouts or seminars.

National Recognition
MECR is one of the oldest AMS training centers,
founded in 1978,
with a national reputation for excellence.
AMS credential awarded.
Undergraduate and graduate credit available.
MECR is an AMS affiliate and MACTE accredited.

Inspirational Setting
MECR is located in Boulder, Colorado
at the foot of the magnificent Rocky Mountains.*

*Ask about our Pacific Northwest training.

Montessori Education Center of the Rockies (303) 494-3002

3300 Redstone Road Boulder, Colorado 80303
Virginia Hennes, Director
Sue Kennedy, Infant and Toddler Coordinator

Educating with excellence since 1978

these Infant and Toddler TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS have sponsored this issue

Center for Montessori Teacher Education/NY
785 Mamaroneck Avenue, White Plains, NY 10605
Carole Wolfe Korngold
914-948-2501 Fax 914-597-2779

Meca-Seton Teacher Training Program
5728 Virginia Street, Clarendon Hills, IL 60514
Anna P. Perry or Celma Perry
630-655-1066 Fax 630-654-0182
email: Meca 1 Seton@aol.com

Mid-America Montessori Teachers Training Institute
10730 Pacific Street, Suite 234, Omaha, NE 68114
LaVonne Plambeck, Director
402-393-1311 Fax 402-397-4958 www.montessori1.org

Montessori Education Center of the Rockies
3300 Redstone Road, Boulder, CO 80303
Virginia Hennes, Director
303-494-3002 Fax 303-494-6104

Montessori Teacher College - Sacramento
1123 D Street, Sacramento, CA 95814
Norman Lorenz, MEd
916-444-9072 Fax 916-444-7987

Montessori Teacher Education Center of Northern California
460 North Livermore Avenue, Livermore, CA 94550
Patricia Chambers or Mary Ellen Kordas
925-455-8021 www.montessoriteachereducation.org

Princeton Center for Teacher Education
487 Cherry Valley Road, Princeton, NJ 08540
Ginny Cusack, Director
609-924-4594 Fax 609-924-2216

San Francisco Bay Area Montessori Teacher Education Center
16492 Foothill Boulevard, San Leandro, CA 94578-2105
Pamela Zell Rigg, PhD
510-278-1115 Fax 510-278-1577
www.MontessoriTEP-SF.com

Infants and Toddlers

VOLUME 5, NUMBER 2

SUMMER 2001

PS 030223

Become a CMTE/NY Infant and Toddler Specialist!

- Deepen your appreciation of the needs of children from birth to three.
- Develop skills to observe, understand and respect infants and toddlers.
- Discover the joy, satisfaction and profound value of assisting the very young in their healthy growth and development.

The CMTE/NY Montessori Infant and Toddler Program is professional training for people working with children from birth to thirty-six months of age. The first program in the United States to offer Infant and Toddler Montessori Certification, CMTE/NY provides an in-depth study in Infant and Toddler Montessori education combined with the most current scientific and psychological research available.

The first three years of life affect a child's ability to thrive and be; self esteem, the ability to form attachments and the establishment of basic trust are all central to this period. The importance of these first years places a great responsibility on the adults in the child's world. Parents and child care providers should be informed, knowledgeable, and well-qualified to assist in this crucial period of physical, emotional and cognitive development.

CMTE/NY's Infant and Toddler Program teaches how to create beautiful, safe and developmentally appropriate learning environments. The program will give you the skills needed to provide the best quality care for infants and toddlers, as well as enrich your own life with a deeper understanding of this remarkable stage of life.

Classes are held at the CMTE/NY summer institute in New Rochelle, New York. Year-round weekend classes are held in Adrian, Michigan. Observations are held at CMTE/NY's model child care center, the Montessori Children's Center at Burke in White Plains, New York and at St. Joseph Academy in Adrian, Michigan. Call us for information and a brochure.

Our CMTE/NY Infant and Toddler Care video is now available. Send $40.00 to order or call for your copy today.

CMTE/NY **CALL: 914-948-2501**
785 Mamaroneck Avenue White Plains, New York 10605

Vol. 5, No. 2

Infants and Toddlers

Published 4 times a year.

The opinions expressed in *Infants and Toddlers* editorials, columns, and features are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the position of the magazine. Acceptance of advertising does not represent endorsement of any product or service.

Requests for permission to reprint materials from *Infants and Toddlers* in another form (e.g. book, newsletter, journal) should be sent in writing to Infants and Toddlers. Permission to reprint is not required if you want to make copies to share with parents, teacher, or students; for library reserve; or for personal use.

Our copyright notice must appear with each copy you make; Copyright 1997 by Infants and Toddlers. All rights reserved.

Send all address changes and inquires about subscriptions to Infants and Toddlers
PO Box 146
Placitas, NM 87043

Address all advertising inquiries and editorial correspondence to the editor:
Lillian DeVault Kroenke
PO Box 146
Placitas, NM 87043
Manuscript and photograph guidelines are available on request.

Printed by
Infants and Toddlers
Elanbe Publishing Services
PO Box 146
Placitas, NM 87043
Phone: (505) 867-8033
Fax: (505) 867-1252

POSTMASTER:
Send address changes to
Infants and Toddlers
PO Box 146, Placitas, NM 87043

All photos for the features were provided by the authors—Susan Tracy, Holly Knox and her assistant Betty Wilbur, Montessori Country Day School, Houston, TX.

Back cover was provided by Eileen Bauermann.

Infants and Toddlers

FEATURES

5 **Diapers and Toileting that Works: Follow the Child**
by Susan Tracy

9 **Discovering the Woods: a photo story**
by Holly Knox

DEPARTMENTS

4 **Editorial**
Such a Bargain

4 **Ask Ginny**
How do you bring an infant into the classroom environment?

Editor: Lillian DeVault Kroenke

Editorial Advisory Board:
Maria Gravel
Carole Korngold
Susan Tracy
Rita Messineo
David Shelton-Dodge
Virginia Varga

Editorial

Such a Bargain

Happily, I've met many of you at the one or more of the many conferences held each year around the country. Some of you have introduced yourself and expressed your appreciation for our journal, *Infants and Toddlers*. One, Holly Knox, brought pictures of her class and discussed the possibility of submitting the article that you will find in this issue. Others, I have met at conference presentations.

I have noted that many of you who have been long time subscribers are also frequent attendees at various conferences. It seems that many of the leaders I have met—infant/toddler teacher trainers, authors, demonstrations class teacher and so on, are also avid readers and promoters of the journal. Approximately one in three renewals are for two years.

You all know the expense and time involved when you attend a conference—registration, lodging, luncheon fees, transportation, shuttle buses, car rental, parking, etc. Yet there may only be three or four presentations of interest to infant and toddler teachers. Of course, there is the significant benefit of networking as well. However, you may only be able to attend one conference a year.

With a subscription to *Infants and Toddlers*, you are usually delivered at least two major features each issue, or a total of eight to ten articles for only $25.00 a year. The authors represent many different teacher education programs and years of experience. And they are yours to read at your leisure. They are always available to use a reference. Such a bargain!

Please feel free to come to our booth, Elanbe Publishing Services, to introduce yourself. It's great to be able to put a face and place to your name. As often as possible, my husband, Bill, travels with me. We are usually very busy during the conference breaks when everyone is busy shopping, but it is wonderful when we have a chance to visit.

Lillian DeVault Kroenke

Ask Ginny...

by Ginny Varga

Q How do you bring an infant into the classroom environment?

A With infants, we have the mother come in several times with her baby for an hour or so. The infant's primary caregiver, who should always feed and diaper the baby for the first period of time, serves the mother. The mother first takes care of the baby in the infant environment. The caregiver watches to see how she changes the baby, how she talks to the baby, how she gives the baby the bottle—does she give the baby the bottle in her right arm or in her left arm? We try to match what the mother has done as much as possible.

The caregiver takes some notes and asks some questions of the mother about the baby's sleep pattern and so on. We try to make the only change—which is not realistic because we are changing the environment—be the person who is caring for the child. Nonetheless, we try to make as few changes as possible.

When the mother comes in the second time, maybe the next day, the child's primary caregiver may pick up the baby.

If the child is breast-fed, be sure to ask the mother if the child has ever taken a bottle.

If the baby has been breast-fed and, because he or she is coming to us, will now be given a bottle, we ask that the mother start bottle-feeding before she brings the child into our care. Taking a bottle is a big change for the baby. It is better for the mother to take care of that transition so that all of a sudden the baby is not taking a bottle from a new person in a new place.

The goal in our minds is to provide as little change as possible for the incoming infant.

For future issues, please direct your questions to:

Ask Ginny...
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

Diapers and Toileting that Works: Follow the Child

by Susan Tracy

In the United States, in the last 30 years, cloth diapers have become a rarity. Coinciding with the widespread use of disposable diapers, toilet training has been happening later and later, often not until a child is three or four years of age.

In Montessori infant/toddler teacher education, early toileting is taught as a practical life, self-care skill. We observe the child's interest—a sensitive period—at approximately 18 to 24 months of age. My experience with my own four children, and hundreds of children in toddler classes, confirms this.

Parents are typically told, by their pediatrician and their friends, not to rush toilet training. I felt uneasy about making a suggestion to parents that seemed contrary to what their pediatricians were recommending. So, in 1996, I reviewed the available research on toilet training. I found no research to guide parents, caregivers, or pediatricians to know when to begin toileting.

With all of the current interest in infant and toddler learning and development, new attention is being given to the early capabilities that they possess. None of this is new to Montessorians. Current research confirms what we have known for years: children develop their basic human capabilities during the first three years.

There are now a few isolated studies of early toileting and a few books have been written on the subject.

I prefer the terms **toileting** or **toilet learning** instead of toilet training, because the adult's role is to provide the opportunity for the child to care for himself or herself.

It is my hope that this article will help for parents and caregivers.

A newborn's skin is sensitive. Coming from an environment of amniotic fluid, even air is foreign to a new baby's skin. Care must be taken when choosing anything that comes in contact with baby's skin.

Diapering

A newborn's skin is sensitive. Coming from an environment of amniotic fluid, even air is foreign to a new baby's skin. Care must be taken when choosing anything that comes in contact with baby's skin.

It is best to use cloth diapers that are all cotton. Velcro or snap diaper covers hold the diaper in place. My favorite is the all-wool cover. It is very cool, soft, breathable, and it repels wetness. One cover can last through several diaper changes, until it becomes soiled. The all-in-one type of cloth diapers (diaper attached inside a vinyl cover) are more expensive and not as breathable but they are even easier to use.

I recommend that a parent purchase five to seven diaper covers and 3 or 4 dozen high-quality cotton diapers. These are NOT the diapers available in discount stores. There is an initial investment of a few hundred dollars, but overall, cloth diapers and early toileting save a family approximately $1,500.

Many who choose cloth diapers do so for environmental reasons. Disposables create a lot of trash and will last for hundreds of years. Human waste does not belong in a landfill.

The Diaper-Changing Area

Change diapers in the bathroom so that the child learns where these things are handled. A changing table is unnecessary, expensive, and potentially dangerous. Babies like to move and can easily fall off a changing table. Changing tables, like cribs and high chairs, raise the child to adult height, requiring that the child then be restrained at a height unsafe for the child.

It is preferable to change the baby on a low pad placed in the bathroom if this is comfortable for the adults. A gardener's kneeling pad makes this easier on the adult.

Dump or scrape solid waste into the toilet. You are supposed to do this even with disposables. The baby learns where bowel movements should go—also a help with toilet learning. Put diapers in a diaper pail—no need to soak them. I like to line the pail with a waterproof nylon drawstring bag.

continued to page 6

DIAPERS AND TOILETING

continued from page 5

Washing Diapers

I wash my own cloth diapers every other day with mild detergent and run them through an extra rinse. Velcro covers should be hung to dry. Hanging diapers out in the sun will help whiten and sterilize them. I do this instead of using bleach. A diaper service is still cheaper than disposables if you prefer not to wash diapers.

The Diaper-Changing Procedure

For parent or caregiver, changing diapers is part of the job description. Diaper changing can be pleasant. We do it cheerfully, without giving the child negative messages about his body or waste—like *icky* or *stinky*.

Diaper changing provides the adult an opportunity to give some attention to the baby several times throughout the day. We can kneel facing the child when we talk. We can verbalize what we are doing.

Once babies can stand well—at 9 to 11 months—it is actually easier to change diapers standing up. You will get used to changing them in this position within a week or two. They want to stand so they squirm less. It is a more independent, less passive position. They can gradually learn to help with removing clothing and diaper changing. This helps ease the transition to toileting, because they are already helping, standing up and in the bathroom.

Toileting

Preparation for Toileting

By changing diapers in the bathroom, the child gets the message early on that the bathroom is the place to take care of elimination needs. The adult empties solid waste from the diaper into the toilet. The child will see this repeatedly and will know where it belongs.

San Francisco Bay Area Montessori Teacher Education Center

Five Week Summer

Intensive Year-Round Schedule

210 Academic Hours

540 Practicum Hours

Complete Infant and Toddler Manuals

American Montessori Society Affiliate

MACTE Accredited

Undergraduate and Graduate credit available

$2,000 inclusive of Registration and Tuition

16492 Foothill Blvd
San Leandro, CA
94578-2107
Phone: 510.278.1115
www.MontessoriTEC-SF.com

Cloth diapers allow both the infant and the adult to notice wetness. The diaper should be changed promptly so that the baby's normal condition is to be clean and dry. Disposable diapers are so absorbent that the child is less aware that wetness results from urination.

Give a baby or toddler some time out of diapers every day. They can be bare-bottomed or wear cotton underpants although it is difficult to find a small size. This will increase awareness of bodily functions, help with diaper rash and enhance freedom of movement.

Babies can often crawl a month or two sooner without a diaper on. This is one of the ways we can provide the opportunity for movement that is important for brain development.

For months before they actually use the toilet, children can be learning the routine involved: pull pants down, remove the diaper or underpants, sit on the potty or toilet, wipe, flush and wash hands.

Washing hands easily requires a stool high enough for the child to reach the sink. Children love to stand for quite awhile, perhaps 30 minutes, with their hands in the water.

Washing hands is wonderful as a natural reinforcer for using the toilet. Run a thin stream of water, or run an inch or two of water into the sink. I have some towels handy. Remember that water does little harm.

Toileting Environment

I recommend that a potty-chair be placed in the bathroom at 9 to 12 months of age. At this age, infants enjoy sitting on any little chair. They are just learning how to sit. At two years of age, they can switch to a big toilet with a step stool.

Provide a diaper pail in the bathroom for the underpants and clean-up towels. Old towels should be available just for this purpose. They can then be washed along with the underpants. Allow the child to clean up along with you as part of the natural consequence.

Sometimes little ones like to put their hands or objects into the toilet. Provide a stool at the sink and tell them, "This is where we wash our hands". A two-step stool, ideally with railings, is needed for a very young child to reach the sink. This can be provided beginning at 12 to 15 months of age.

Don't keep the bathroom door closed, and don't put a lock on the door. The message sent is, "This is not for you!" Eventually, we want the child to use the toilet and not to be put off by the message that for many months has been "No!"

Clothing

Often a child of 12 to 16 months will tug on his or her pants or lift their shirt. This is an early attempt at undressing that indicates that the child can begin to participate in dressing and undressing. Provide clothing that allows independence: elastic-waist pants, loose shirts and socks, slip-on Velcro shoes.

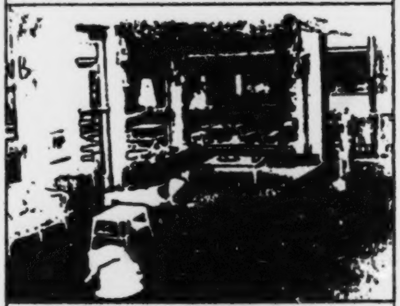
During the toilet learning process, it is easiest for children to have no clothing over their underpants. Just dress them in underwear and a shirt whenever possible. They will wear pants again when they are ready.

continued to page 8

Princeton
Center
Teacher
Education

AMS Certification Programs
- Infant and Toddler
- Early Childhood
- Elementary

MACTE Accredited



PCTE...the Inside Track
487 Cherry Valley Road
Princeton, New Jersey 08540
609-924-4594 • Fax: 609-924-2216

DIAPERS AND TOILETING

continued from page 7

The most effective step toward toilet learning is to allow the child to wear underwear. Thick or waterproof training pants protect your carpet and furniture better, but thin cotton underwear allows the child to feel and see what is happening!

Perhaps the child can spend time outdoors or in parts of the home where the mess is not as much of a concern. It is best not to go back to diapers at night or when going out. You can put plastic pants over the underwear at these times.

Toileting Routine

By 15 months and as early as 9 months, provide a potty-chair. Observe and note the child's elimination schedule. Adults pay much closer attention when the child is in underwear, bare-bottomed or at least in cloth diapers. Notice signs with facial expressions like hiding or grunting. Take the child to the potting according to these observations so he or she has some beginning experience. There is no pressure for the child to produce anything in the potty.

By 18 months, or even 16 months, most toddlers are very interested in the bathroom, and they are gaining the necessary muscular control. If they are comfortable with it, the older siblings and adults in the household can allow the toddler to follow them into the bathroom. Often they are quite insistent about this anyway! They are not concerned about privacy—their own or others.

At this age, the toddler can be using the potty many times per day. Toddlers respond well to routine. It can become routine to use the potty before going outside, before eating, before and after sleeping, before going on an outing and when the parent goes. "No" is a toddler's answer to most any question—so don't ask, "Do you need to use the potty?" Say instead, "It's time to go potty", or better, "We use the bathroom before we...."

Within a few weeks or months, a toddler can be using the potty consistently.

The adult needs to be calm when there is an *accident*. We do not need to scold, it is a natural process and they are just learning to control it. As adults, we want instant perfection. Try to be matter-of fact. If the adults involved are prepared for clean up, they are not so easily frustrated.

When the child wets or soils underpants, play is interrupted. It is time to change and clean up. This is a natural consequence. They will come to prefer using the bathroom to avoid the feeling of wet clothing—especially if they have spent their babyhood in clean and dry cloth diapers—or to avoid changing and cleaning up.

continued to page 16

The Learning TOWER

The Learning Tower® is a child's special place to observe, participate and create! A step stool, desk, puppet theater, fort - your child's imagination is the limit. Strong Baltic birch with choice of non-toxic color finishes including natural. Will be enjoyed for generations. For ages 2-6.

Ask for a free Brochure!

Order Direct at

1-800-704-9058

Dr.Toy's
100 BEST
Children's Products

Montessori
Infants and Toddlers Videos

Infant/Toddler Environments:
Actual video of three different classroom environments. Emphasis is placed on aesthetic and well developed environments. *Approx. 30 min. $50.00*

Infant/Toddler Activities
Actual video of children interacting with their environments. Explore new ideas. Watch how children respond. *Approx. 35 min. $40.00*

Montessori Infant and Toddler Care
Filmed at several programs around the country. Emphasizes Montessori theory and practice. *Approx. 9 min. $40.00*

A Helping Hand
Actual video of ways adults can assist children. Give just the necessary help. *$20.00*

Each video contains a brief description of its contents.

Send your order with payment to:
Infants and Toddlers Videos
c/o Virginia Varga
6106 Frederick Road
Dayton, OH 45414

Discovering the Woods

By Holly Knox

This year **Holly Knox** is starting her third year as a Toddler teacher at the Wilmington Montessori School. Previously she worked at the Children's House Montessori School in State College, PA. She has a B.S. in Early Childhood Education and Elementary Education from Millersville University and a Montessori Infant/Toddler certificate from CMTE/NY.

Discovering the natural environment is what young children do best. They are little scientists. They want to touch everything! They test to see if an object can be thrown, pulled apart and it it can be eaten. They think, "What happens if…?" Since they have such a natural curiosity, why not let them discover the gifts that nature supplies.

I am fortunate that the school where I work is located on 25 acres. Most of the property is wooded with paths and streams. You would never know that the property runs along interstate I-95. As soon as we walk into the woods, it feel as though we are in another place. We leave the classroom behind. It gives us time to slow down, listen to the sounds around us and discover the beauty that surrounds us.

At the Beginning of the Year

At the beginning of the year, we take the children to the woods in small groups or with extra help about once a week. This allows us to become familiar with the new environment. It gives the staff an opportunity to set basic ground rules—stay close to the group and be respectful to your peers and to the environment. The children are asked not to pick up anything living. They are asked to return all living and non-living objects to the place where they were found.

With these basic rules in place, the children are free to discover. When the staff feels comfortable taking the children to the woods, we increase the size of the group and go more frequently.

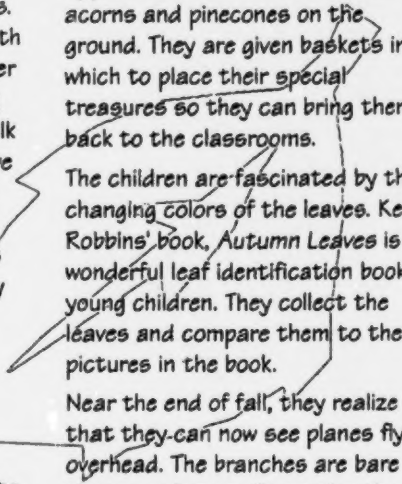
This has become a year round activity allowing the children to experience the four season. The only thing that keeps us out of the woods is rain or ice. Children in one of the other classroom has a pair of boots so they can experience the woods after the rain.

In the Fall

In the fall, when we start, the woods are lush and green after a late summer rain. The floor is covered with plants and flowers. As fall approaches, the children notice acorns and pinecones on the ground. They are given baskets in which to place their special treasures so they can bring them back to the classrooms.

The children are fascinated by the changing colors of the leaves. Ken Robbins' book, *Autumn Leaves* is a wonderful leaf identification book for young children. They collect the leaves and compare them to the pictures in the book.

Near the end of fall, they realize that they can now see planes flying overhead. The branches are bare and the ground cover dies under the blanket of leaves.



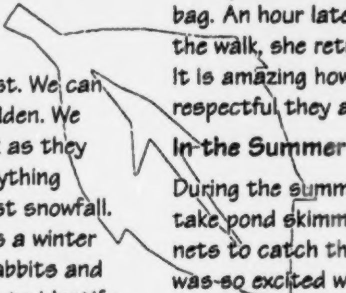
In the Winter

Winter is such a contrast. We can see things that were hidden. We hear the branches creak as they sway in the breeze. Everything seems bare until the first snowfall. Then all of a sudden it is a winter wonderland. Squirrels, rabbits and birds leave tracks for us to identify. We see our own tracks. The children stop telling us they are cold when we are in the woods. They are actively discovering their environment.

In the Spring

The excitement builds with the arrival of spring. The buds start to open. We hear the birds chirping and the stream seems to babble about all of the new life that it contains. We start visiting the woods daily to see what has changed, bloomed or come out of hibernation. There is a whole new world to discover.

The bagworms that adults despise create a commotion. "What is that?" "Who lives in it?" We watch the little black creatures move around until they emerge as caterpillars. The children search for them in hopes of being able to hold one. A little girl once removed a caterpillar from the outside of its bag. An hour later, when we finished the walk, she returned it to the bag. It is amazing how gentle and respectful they are.



In the Summer

During the summer, the children take pond skimmer and butterfly nets to catch the fish. Everyone was so excited when we caught our first fish. We had to put them in a bucket and show them to the other classes. When we were finished observing the fish, a teacher returns the fish safely back to the water. There is always something new to discover when you combine nature and children!

continued on page 10

DISCOVERING THE WOODS

a photo story

by Holly Kno

Throughout the walk the children stop to collect leaves, pinecones, acorns and whatever else they can place in their basket.

1

Who can resist standing in a pile of leaves? It is so exciting to watch them flutter down around you.

2

At the b children to all of environn This is a vantage When al on your

6

It is such an accomplishment when the children can get on the log themselves. Once they are on the log, if needed, a staff member will hold a hand to assist with their balance.

5

One day, after many walks, a child found this log and climbed on top of it. Since then, the children have been determined to crawl or walk the length of the log.

3

ınch the
stop to listen
the
ental sounds.
so the best
point to watch the freight trains go by.
of the children are on the bench, they mimic me "Put your hands
ead. Put your hands on your mouth. Put your hands on your ears. Now listen."

4

After a few seconds, they tell us about the birds, planes, and trains. On rare occasions we have identified woodpeckers.

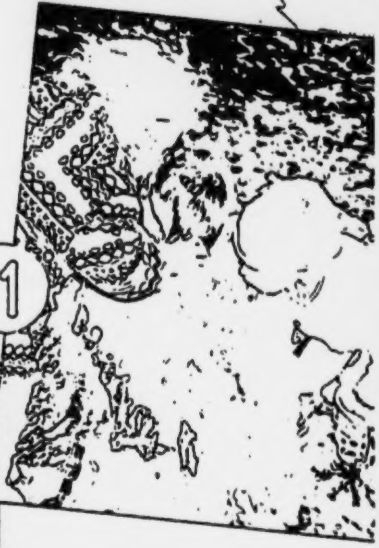
9

The children look into the base of the tree to see which new bug has been trapped in a spider's web. In the fall, the webs collect many leaves.

8

Birds and bugs have made holes at the end of the log. These holes require close inspection. We brainstorm how these holes might have been made while the children check the holes with their fingers.

10


11

We call the stump of the tree the "bug hotel". The children look in the holes to see who might live there. So far, we have seen ants and bees. Like anything living, this stump is starting to deteriorate. The children have been able to break off different sections to inspect.

7

DISCOVERING THE WOODS

a photo story - continued

⑫

Lying on these benches takes lots of practice, coordination, and trust. Many of the children ask that a staff member stay close by until they feel comfortable.

⑬

When the children are lying down, we watch the trees move and look for the sun. This can be a difficult task when all of the leaves are on the trees.

⑰

We need to walk down the stairs to find the stream. You will notice that the handrail is too high for some of the children. We allow them to be creative when finding a way down to the lower level.

⑱

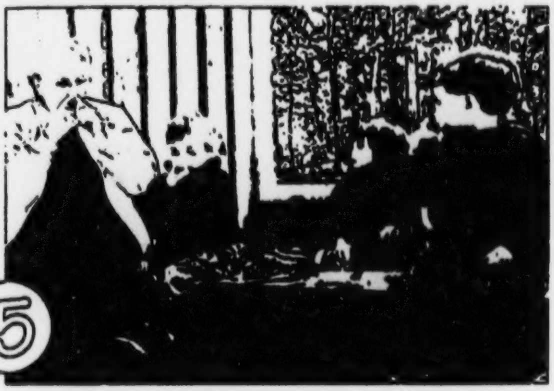
On the way to the stream, we stop to listen to the waterfall over the rocks. This can be really calming for the children/

⑲

⑳

14

This used to be a stage for the elementary children's Shakespeare play productions. Over the years vandals have torn it apart. The children used to enjoy dropping rocks down a hole in the wood. Now due to safety concerns, we keep the children off of the stage.



15

This platform is where we sit while we wait for all of the children to catch up. We typically sing songs about things we find in the woods.

16

GRAY SQUIRREL
Gray squirrel, gray squirrel, swish your bushy tail.
Gray squirrel, gray squirrel, swish your bushy tail.
Wrinkle up your funny nose,
Put a nut between your toes.
Gray squirrel, gray squirrel, swish your bushy tail.

FISH SONG
All the fish are swimming in the water,
Swimming in the water, swimming in the water.
All the fish are swimming in the water.
Bubble, bubble, bubble, SPLASH!
(We continue with great big fish and tiny fish.)

Can you tell this is a stream? The children can pick up the wet leaves. We are fortunate to watch a small whirlpool of leaves circulating in the current. In the spring, the children who are wearing boots may cross the stream. We also use nets to catch fish. We watch for water bugs to float by. We are all amazed that water bugs' shadows makes them look like they have round legs. The children can't figure out why.

21

22

On the way back to the path, the children stop to feel the soft moss.

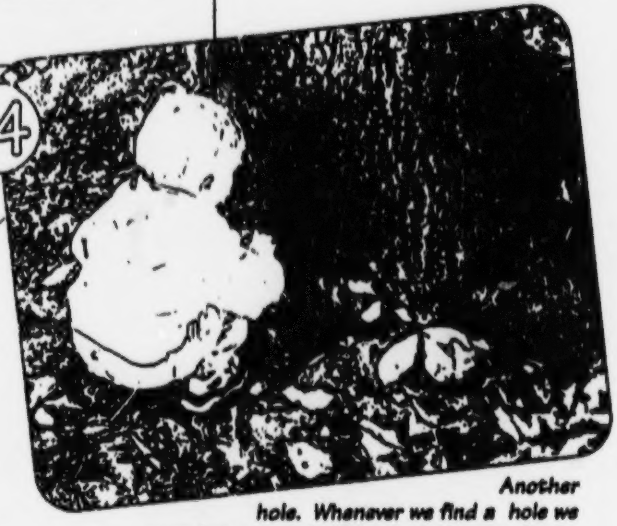
DISCOVERING THE WOODS

a photo story continued

23

Whoops! One of the boys caught himself in mid-fall. This is expected when we are walking on rocks, branches, and uneven ground. If they are not injured, we ask them to stand up and brush themselves off. It is amazing how fast the children recover if we act as though it is part of the adventure of walking in the woods. Guests who join us on walks are amazed at how adept the children are. I usually ask visitors to step back and observe.

24



Another hole. Whenever we find a hole we speculate why it is there and who may live in it. Recently, a child put his head in the hole to look for squirrels. I was glad there were no animals in the hole at the time.

27

28

Each child climbs the steps at his or her own pace. We try to let the children move at their own pace. We have numerous stopping points where we stop and sing songs while we wait for everyone to catch up. When we get too far apart, we are more likely to lose control of the class.

29

Just one of the many obstacles the children come across when they explore.

25

26

The children gather on the rock near the stream to read books and sing songs. Today we are reading about fall leaves. Over the course of the year, we found a new rock that overlooks the stream. This rock is large enough to hold 15 children. We are waiting for the day when a child gets too close to the edge and falls in.

30

"I know there is a bug under here."

All photos for this story were taken by Holly & her assistant, Betty Wilbur.

31

An hour later we are on our way out of the woods. One of the children found a ball at the bottom of the hill. He carries it up to the preschool playground.

32

DIAPERS AND TOILETING

continued from page 8

The adult is prepared, talks with the child and provides the environment and opportunity for toileting. We are not forcing the child; we are allowing the child to follow his own interest.

When the Sensitive Period has Passed

At 18 months, children are imitating whatever they see others doing. By the second birthday, any normal child is capable of bladder and bowel control. This is the upper extreme; most are ready closer to 18 months.

Three-year-olds are not as imitative as toddlers. More conscious than imitative, the three-year-old can easily engage the adult in a battle over toileting—and numerous other issues. Opposition has replaced interest.

Diapers are for babies. When we put a diaper on a toddler, or worse, a child of 3 or 4, we are communicating that we don't think they are capable of caring for themselves in this way. They have been told, through the adult's actions, "You can't". They have developed and exercised all the muscles of their body, except those required for bladder and bowel control. Delay will affect the functioning of those muscles.

When we allow them to care for themselves, they are proud! Let your child have this sense of accomplishment, rewards are not necessary. The primary motivation is pride in caring for themselves. My response is one of acknowledge-ment—"Yes, I see you used the toilet!"

For the child past the sensitive period of 18 to 24 months, it is best to delay no longer and provide underwear. Do not provide diapers any more. Express your confidence in the child's toileting ability.

Many schools do not allow a three-year-old to enroll until they are using the bathroom. However, the child will learn more easily in a classroom setting where they will notice that others are using the bathroom and are NOT wearing diapers.

Suggestions for Toileting in a School or Child Care Setting

Typically, a child who is attending school or child-care will learn toileting faster there. The more hours they spend there, the faster they learn. This assumes that the school provides the opportunity for toileting. Cooperation at home helps.

Teachers must communicate about this. If they send home a note listing

Montessori Teacher Education Center of Northern California

"Unless we adults are enlightened as to the way the child's mind develops, we are likely to become the greatest obstacle to his progress." Maria Montessori

INFANT TODDLER TRAINING

☐ Academic Year & Summer Course Schedule
☐ AMS Trained Staff
☐ Small Class Size
☐ On-site Environments

Phone: 925-455-8021
Address: 460 North Livermore Avenue
Livermore, CA 94550
Website: www.montessoriteachereducation.org

Patricia Chambers, *Director of Training*

times that the child used the toilet, parents will be more likely to accept that their child no longer needs diapers.

Professionals must be comfortable with bathroom issues, and be willing to work on this with children. Learning to use the bathroom is as important as any other classroom learning. It is part of a Montessori Infant/Toddler teacher's training and it is a part of our curriculum.

When a new child starts in a toddler class, I put him or her in underwear on their second or third day. I have underwear available in drawers near the bathroom, so they can choose. It is best if the child arrives in underwear; otherwise we remove the diaper right away upon arrival. The child sees other toddlers wearing underwear and using the bathroom.

When a new group starts in the fall, the first two months are very much focussed on toileting. There will usually be one adult in the bathroom, giving some assistance as children undress, use the potty or toilet, dress, and wash hands. The adult sits near the doorway of the bathroom on a low stool. She can then prevent children from leaving until they are in dry underwear and have washed their hands. Usually, several children are in the bathroom, so the other staff is not over-burdened by one adult being in the bathroom.

DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION FOR SUSAN?
No article covers everything you want to know on any subject. Send your question to Infants and Toddlers, PO Box 146, Placitas, NM 87043. Susan will answer it in the next issue.

After a few months, the children are using the bathroom; there is no diaper changing to be done, and the staff actually has more time to devote to other activities with the children.

In choosing a toddler classroom, it is important that there is an easy access to a bathroom. It is wonderful to have small toilets and low sinks.

It is easier to clean hard floors than carpeting, so I prefer these in both the bathroom and the

continued to page 18

M ONTESSORI SERVICES

We offer child-size, age-appropriate items for your child at home:

- Art
- Music
- Books
- Cooking
- Cleaning Up
- Woodworking
- Cooperative Games
- Nature & Gardening

Free Catalog

Toll Free: 1-877-975-3003
Ask for our Mini-Catalog
for Families.

Website: www.montessoriservices.com

A Resource for Families

DIAPERS AND TOILETING

continued from page 17

classroom. Use area rugs so there are some soft areas.

Furniture should be easy to clean as well. I do not recommend upholstered furniture for a toddler classroom, unless it has a washable cover. Adults allow the children more freedom and they are calmer when they know that any accidents can be cleaned up.

Susan Tracy, M.Ed., is a Montessori teacher, lecturer, consultant, and parent educator. Susan frequently speaks to groups of educators and parents. She publishes articles of help to those who care for young children.

A mother of four, Susan has led parenting groups since 1989. She lectures with MECA Montessori teacher education course and Kendall College.

In addition to a bachelor's Degree in Psychology from Northwestern University and a Master's Degree in Education from Loyola College in Maryland, Susan holds Infant/Toddler certificates from both the American Montessori Society and Association Montessori Internationale. She insists, however, that her greatest education has been through observing children.

Acting on her belief that raising children is society's most important job, Susan founded **Learning Together**, a parent education center located in Palatine, Illinois. Course offerings include expectant parent classes, parenting classes, and parent-infant program, all based in the Montessori approach.

Susan can be reached at 847/540-5004 or by email: StracyMEd@aol.com.

Moving? Changing your name or address?

Be sure to let us know as soon as possible. We don't want you to miss a single issue of your subscription. *Send any change to:*

Infants and Toddlers
PO Box 146
Placitas, NM 87043
or call **505-291-8022**
fax **505-291-1252**

Job Opportunities

Classified ads contain a maximum of 36 characters per line including each space between words. Ads must be placed by written correspondence to

Infants and Toddlers
PO Box 146
Placitas, NM 87043

and must be accompanied by payment of $8.00 per line. This price does not include a copy of the journal. Submit by July 1 for the Summer 2001 edition.

Infants and Toddlers Subscription Form

Subscriber Information (Please Print):

Name ______________________
Address ______________________
____
City ____________ State____ Zip ________
Phone ____________ Fax ____________

Send this form and payment to:
Infants and Toddlers
PO Box 146
Placitas, NM 87043

Regular Subscription:
____ 1 year (4 issues) $25.00 _____
____ 2 years (8 issues) $45.00 _____
Intern Subscription:
____ 1 year (4 issues) $20.00 _____
Course: ____________ Year: ______
Bulk Mail Subscription: (School Orders Only)
______ copies x $2.50 x 4 = $ _____
Order Total $ _____
Please start with issue: Vol____ No____

Bulk Order Example (schools only): to order 10 copies:
10 copies (10 copy min) x $2.50 x 4 issues = $100.00

Form of Payment:
___ Check ___ VISA ___ MC ___ Discover
Account# _______ _______ _______ _______
Expires: _____ / _____
Cardholder (Please Print):
____
Signature: ______________________

Montessori Education Center of the Rockies

Infant and Toddler Training

"It is we who must go at his pace."
Maria Montessori, *The Absorbent Mind*

Intensive Study
Six weeks summer training
210 academic hours, plus
1 mid-winter seminar
9 month, 400 hour internship

Highly Qualified Staff
All AMS Infant and Toddler trained
Extensive Infant and Toddler experience

Individual Attention
Small class size
Personal approach

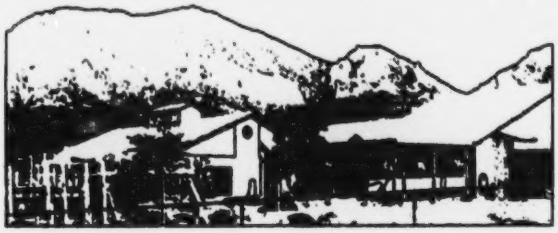
Observation/Interaction Opportunities
Model on-site Toddler environment

Inclusive Price
Tuition includes cost of academic,
practicum and seminar phases.
No extra fees for handouts or seminars.

National Recognition
MECR is one of the oldest AMS training centers,
founded in 1978,
with a national reputation for excellence.
AMS credential awarded.
Undergraduate and graduate credit available.
MECR is an AMS affiliate and MACTE accredited.

Inspirational Setting
MECR is located in Boulder, Colorado
at the foot of the magnificent Rocky Mountains.*

*Ask about our Pacific Northwest training.



Montessori Education Center of the Rockies (303) 494-3002
3300 Redstone Road Boulder, Colorado 80303
Virginia Hennes, Director
Sue Kennedy, Infant and Toddler Coordinator

Educating with excellence since 1978

these Infant and Toddler TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS have sponsored this issue

Center for Montessori Teacher Education/NY
785 Mamaroneck Avenue, White Plains, NY 10605
Carole Wolfe Korngold
914-948-2501 Fax 914-597-2779

Meca-Seton Teacher Training Program
5728 Virginia Street, Clarendon Hills, IL 60514
Anna P. Perry or Celma Perry
630-655-1066 Fax 630-654-0182
email: Meca 1 Seton@aol.com

Mid-America Montessori Teachers Training Institute
10730 Pacific Street, Suite 234, Omaha, NE 68114
LaVonne Plambeck, Director
402-393-1311 Fax 402-397-4958 www.montessori1.org

Montessori Associates, Inc.
P. O. Box 2319, Gray, Georgia 31032
478-986-1779 www.montessori-associates.com
Vonnie Fritze, Course Director
478-477-3722 email: JLFritze@aol.com

Montessori Education Center of the Rockies
3300 Redstone Road, Boulder, CO 80303
Virginia Hennes, Director
303-494-3002 Fax 303-494-6104

Montessori Teacher Education Center of Northern California
460 North Livermore Avenue, Livermore, CA 94550
Patricia Chambers or Mary Ellen Kordas
925-455-8021 www.montessoriteachereducation.org

Princeton Center for Teacher Education
487 Cherry Valley Road, Princeton, NJ 08540
Ginny Cusack, Director
609-924-4594 Fax 609-924-2216

San Francisco Bay Area Montessori Teacher Education Center
16492 Foothill Boulevard, San Leandro, CA 94578-2105
Pamela Zell Rigg, PhD
510-278-1115 Fax 510-278-1577
www.MontessoriTEP-SF.com

Infants and Toddlers

VOLUME 5, NUMBER 3

FALL 2001

PS 030223

Become a CMTE/NY Infant and Toddler Specialist!

- Deepen your appreciation of the needs of children from birth to three.
- Develop skills to observe, understand and respect infants and toddlers.
- Discover the joy, satisfaction and profound value of assisting the very young in their healthy growth and development.

The CMTE/NY Montessori Infant and Toddler Program is professional training for people working with children from birth to thirty-six months of age. The first program in the United States to offer Infant and Toddler Montessori Certification, CMTE/NY provides an in-depth study in Infant and Toddler Montessori education combined with the most current scientific and psychological research available.

The first three years of life affect a child's ability to thrive and be; self esteem, the ability to form attachments and the establishment of basic trust are all central to this period. The importance of these first years places a great responsibility on the adults in the child's world. Parents and child care providers should be informed, knowledgeable, and well-qualified to assist in this crucial period of physical, emotional and cognitive development.

CMTE/NY's Infant and Toddler Program teaches how to create beautiful, safe and developmentally appropriate learning environments. The program will give you the skills needed to provide the best quality care for infants and toddlers, as well as enrich your own life with a deeper understanding of this remarkable stage of life.

Classes are held at the CMTE/NY summer institute in New Rochelle, New York. Year-round weekend classes are held in Adrian, Michigan. Observations are held at CMTE/NY's model child care center, the Montessori Children's Center at Burke in White Plains, New York and at St. Joseph Academy in Adrian, Michigan. Call us for information and a brochure.

Our CMTE/NY Infant and Toddler Care video is now available. Send $40.00 to order or call for your copy today.

CMTE/NY **CALL: 914-948-2501**
785 Mamaroneck Avenue White Plains, New York 10605

2

Infants and Toddlers

Vol. 5, No. 3

Infants and Toddlers

Published 4 times a year.

The opinions expressed in *Infants and Toddlers* editorials, columns, and features are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the position of the magazine. Acceptance of advertising does not represent endorsement of any product or service.

Requests for permission to reprint materials from *Infants and Toddlers* in another form (e.g. book, newsletter, journal) should be sent in writing to Infants and Toddlers. Permission to reprint is not required if you want to make copies to share with parents, teacher, or students; for library reserve; or for personal use.

Our copyright notice must appear with each copy you make: Copyright 1997 by Infants and Toddlers. All rights reserved.

Send all address changes and inquires about subscriptions to Infants and Toddlers
PO Box 146
Placitas, NM 87043

Address all advertising inquiries and editorial correspondence to the editor:
Lillian DeVault Kroenke
PO Box 146
Placitas, NM 87043
Manuscript and photograph guidelines are available on request.

Printed by
Infants and Toddlers
Elanbe Publishing Services
PO Box 146
Placitas, NM 87043
Phone: (505) 867-8033
Fax: (505) 867-1252

All photos for the features were taken by Lillian Kroenke with permission from Montessori Country Day School, Houston, TX.

Back cover was provided by Eileen Bauermann.

FEATURES

5 **A Piaget Primer: How Knowledge Develops for Infants and Toddlers**
by Sue Kennedy

9 **Young Children and War News**
by P. Donahue Shortridge

10 **Visiting an Infant Environment: a photo story**
by Lillian DeVault Kroenke

DEPARTMENTS

4 **Editorial**
Transmitting Cultures

4 **Ask Ginny**
What do children learn in a toddler class?

12 **Questions for Susan About Diapers and Toileting**

Editor: Lillian DeVault Kroenke

Editorial Advisory Board:
Maria Gravel
Carole Korngold
Susan Tracy
Rita Messineo
David Shelton-Dodge
Virginia Varga

Editorial

Transmitting Cultures

I'm inclined to say, "What a difference a day makes!" However, the terrorist attack in New York actually followed many earlier terrorist incidents, which tested our response and our resolve.

We talk about the child's role in the transmission of the culture in which he or she is born. Now, suddenly for most of us, we are becoming very conscious of the culture being transmitted to so many of the children of Afghanistan.

Perhaps you heard the CNN interview of a 10-year-old boy. When asked about his life objectives, he declared that he hopes to become a suicide bomber. And, he believes that if he is really fortunate, he will meet Usama bin Laden personally. His mother also inspires him to become a suicide bomber. Then he rode away on his bike. Young children are taught songs that glorify the suicide bomber and life after youthful life is lost.

Whoa! We are aware of the difficult lives of many children in many segments of our own population. We have made few inroads to help them.

As a group, we have dedicated ourselves to nurture many children and parents as we perform our daily tasks in our classrooms. The old and tested rule is that help is more likely to be accepted by those who need the least help. Imagine the challenge of spreading peace to the children of the world who live in war-ravaged and terrorist-controlled countries.

Lillian -
Thank you for your good work.
Pamela Rigg

Those of us in Montessori understand the importance of nurturing the unfolding expression of our human potential and our human spirit. The more we learn and practice Dr. Montessori's insights, the more we find our own personal peace. The more we practice peace, the more we see peaceful classrooms. The more we help parents, the more we find peace at home.

We have powerful strategies. Hopefully, by sharing Montessori and our own inner peace, we contribute to peace in our communities. Our ideal in this slow and complex process is to help spread peace on earth for all mankind. Let us look forward to the day when we can help these children and their parents as well.

Lillian DeVault Kroenke

Ask Ginny...

by Ginny Varga

Q What do children learn in a toddler class?

A Current research confirms the importance of learning in the first three years of life. How and what children learn affects them throughout their lifetime. In a Montessori toddler class they should learn, among many other things:

1. That they are loved, respected and safe.
2. That everyone has needs, wants and feelings.
3. That they can communicate their needs and wants and trust that they will receive a positive response.
4. That they are competent learners.
5. That they respect one another.
6. To concentrate and focus on their exploration, activities and interest.
7. To care for their physical needs, i.e., undressing, dressing, toileting, washing their hands and wiping their nose as well as learning to eat correctly.
8. To develop verbal language.
9. That everything has a name.
10. To develop their physical coordination.
11. To learn how things work.
12. To behave in culturally appropriate ways.
13. To identify the special kind of person they are becoming.

For future issues, please direct your questions to:

[redacted]

A Piaget Primer

by Sue Kennedy

how knowledge develops for infants and toddlers

Think about a baby that has just come into this world. He or she is brand new to this place. This child has never been here in this particular state before. The baby's state has been very fluid and warm. There's been light and slightly muffled noise. "I've experienced that. But it was nothing like this world that I've been born into."

But, instantly, because of what Dr. Montessori called the *horme*—the inner drive, a body-driven need of a child to learn, I can imagine that the newborn says (and I know that children don't really say this), "Boy, I have a lot of things to learn. I have to spend every waking minute I have learning." Now, does that describe an infant and a toddler or not? Exactly! They are learning every minute they are awake.

So, we have Dr. Montessori way ahead of her time talking about what the baby could do and when the baby could do it. Then we have Piaget coming along telling us the same things.

Piaget is fascinating. He has a lot to tell us. There are people who disagree with some of his conclusions about when a particular kind of knowledge develops, but they do not disagree with his theory about how knowledge develops.

Even Piaget himself said that knowledge develops faster in some children and slower in other children. But all children go through the same stages. There is still a wide range of normal development. That, then, is our job—to know normal development so that we know when we are seeing early development, late development, delayed development, or development that might need some outside help.

Piaget sent his own children to a Montessori school and was president of a Montessori society in France. He recorded his observations of his own three children using the scientific method. He reached some very important conclusions about children's development.

Schema

Piaget gave us some very good ways to think about how we learn something. For instance, the word schema means very simply all the bits of information I know about an object or person at a particular time.

Close your eyes and think of a tree. What things do you know about a tree? It has roots, a trunk, green leaves and branches. It drops its leaves. It's living. It grows. It takes in water. It flowers. The trunk is brown. It takes in carbon dioxide. It gives off oxygen. It provides shelter for animals. It decays. It dies. So, we know a lot about a tree, don't we? We have an extensive schema about a tree!

Now, one kind of tree does not drop all its leaves at once. In fact, we don't call them leaves. We call them needles. Maybe we have more information (schemas) to learn about trees.

Some young children have a schema about short, furry, four-legged animals. They are all cats! Or dogs, depending on which they have in their household. So every short, furry, four-legged animal that they see is a cat—or a dog. They have a schema about all wheeled vehicles—a truck or a car.

Even a tiny baby develops a really good schema about milk. If his mom is breastfeeding him, that is the kind of schema he has. If he is bottle-fed, then that is his schema about milk. And the world is great! He knows everything that he needs to know because maybe right now milk is all he needs to know about.

Sue Kennedy has worked with children for 40 years and is currently the Infant and Toddler Coordinator for the Montessori Education Center of the Rockies in Boulder, CO, where she also teaches Child Development and Child, Family and Community. She has degrees in elementary education, and counseling psychology. Sue is certified by the American Montessori Society at two levels: Birth to 3 and 3 to 6.

Then, one day mom has her baby in her arms and she puts the tip of a spoon on the child's lips. He kind of licks it and whoa! This doesn't feel like any milk he's ever tasted. He tastes a little bit—and he likes it! Now, he has a milk and cereal schema. Now, he's set for life.

And about that time, there is something different. This time there is a little chunk of something down there on the table. He picks it up and he puts it in his mouth because that is the thing to do to find out about it. And what do you know—now he has a milk, cereal and banana schema. Knowledge is growing by leaps and bounds.

This is the way it goes—for the baby—and for us. Believe me, if you are not adding to your schema of whatever it is everyday, you better stop and take a look because there are a lot of things to know in this world today. Be as open as an infant

continued to page 6

A PIAGET PRIMER

continued from page 5

or a toddler is to learning. Nurture your sense of wonder constantly!

Piaget's Terminology

Assimilation, accommodation and adaptation all generally have to do with how we deal with all this information—whether it's eating a banana or flying an airplane. It includes how I process information, put it with the information (schema) that I already know and make a whole bunch of new information. These three words deal with different aspects of that process.

Simply put, **assimilation** is the taking in of new information. **Accommodation** is putting it together with what I already know about the subject. And **adaptation** is integrating this new combination of information into my original schema to form a new schema.

Piaget may be hard to read, but he is easy to understand. Take some of the terms and just look at what they mean. For instance, let's look at Piaget's first stage, that first month of life. How are our children interacting with their environment in that first month of life? What do they have to work with?

What happens when you put your finger in a newborn baby's palm? What does he or she do? Do babies lie there and think, "Oh, I don't know. Do I take hold of this finger or not?" No! You touch their palms and they grasp your finger strongly with what we call the **palmar grasp reflex.** You touch their cheeks and what do they do? They turn their heads in the **rooting reflex.** Reflexes are in place at birth.

Correlation with Brain Research

According to Piaget, knowledge comes about by the interaction of the actor (the child or the adult) on the environment. Reflexes allow the child to interact with the environment in the first month or so of life. This behavior ties directly into brain research that tells us that at birth probably only the lower centers of the brain—the part that has to do with the involuntary muscles and systems—have nerve cells that have made the very first connections between themselves.

Before the nerve cells can really function, they need an insulating coating around the connections between them—the axons and dendrites that connect the nerve cells (neurons) and carry the messages for survival.

You know how an electric wire will not work unless it has insulation. Well, we don't work either without insulation because we also run on electricity as well as chemistry. The insulation around these neuronal connections is a substance called myelin. Once the nerves are coated with myelin, they can work very efficiently, very effectively.

We believe that at birth only those nerve connections in the lower center of the brain are fully coated with myelin. That lower center is the area for involuntary muscle movement. The babies first movements, reflexes, are involuntary movements.

Myelin, Physical Movement and Fatty Protein

First of all, myelin must be developed. It develops through physical movement—up and down, swinging around, sitting, whatever. Myelin is also composed of a fatty protein. That is one of the reasons why children need whole milk. They need a lot of protein in their early life for the formation of myelin. This is a part of the nervous system that is not finished.

Myelin starts in the lower part of the brain and then moves upward through the brain, coating more nerve cell connections as they are formed. Soon the voluntary movements start to come into play. Now, when you touch the palm of a two or three-month-old, the child does pause for a while to think. "Do I really want to grasp this finger or not? Yes. Okay, I'll do it when I am ready." Then their fingers close around your finger.

How Children Learn

The Five Senses

Piaget said a lot of good things about knowledge. Knowledge is not something that exists "out there." For knowledge to be meaningful to the child—to any of us—it has to be something that is actively experienced.

I could write all day and you could read all day about how to land a small airplane because I can do that. But you wouldn't know what on earth I was talking about until you experienced it yourself.

First of all, Piaget says that these children who are learning so much are learning in two ways, the only two ways that it is possible for them to learn. They learn through movement and through their senses, through every sense that they have.

What are the major senses? Smell, sight, touch, taste, hearing! Three of these—sight, touch and hearing—are very important and two of them are not really necessary for survival, but they are really nice to have around. Smell, for example, makes food taste a lot better. It also brings back memories when you can smell an odor from your past because the memory center in the brain and the olfactory (smell) center are close together.

The Other Vital Senses

The Vestibular Sense

The other two senses necessary for survival are the vestibular and the proprioceptive senses. The vestibular center is located in the inner ear. If you have ever seen a picture of the inner ear, you might be surprised that we can even hear with all the things located there. The vestibular sense helps us understand gravity and where our body is in space.

If you ever had a friend with an inner ear infection (or if you had one yourself), what was the result? You must go to bed because, with the extreme dizzines, you can not walk across the floor. Your sense of balance is gone.

There's another interesting thing about the vestibular sense. Maybe you have been out on a boat and you got a little dizzy. This happens because the vestibular sense has been very upset. The boat is rolling or you can't see the horizon or some other drastic thing has happened. And the vestibular sense is right next to the vomiting center of the brain.

The Proprioceptive Sense

Now, let's look at the proprioceptive sense. There are centers in the brain that are the processors for the proprioceptive sense, but the actual intakers of information—the receptors—for the proprioceptive sense are all over our body. They are lodged in the muscles and ligaments that are attached to our joints. The proprioceptive sense tells us where our seat meets the chair. It gives us an idea about where the parts of our body are and what they are doing.

Without these two senses working, we lack balance and agility. I experienced this for myself when I had my knee replacement operation. All of a sudden, if I was trying to walk up a set of stairs, I had to look at my foot because I didn't know how high it was to reach the next step. If I was walking down the set of stairs, I had to look down to make sure my foot was out far enough so that I didn't catch my heel when I went down to the next step.

I asked my physical therapist what was going on. It was terrible! She told me that when the doctor went into my knee, he cut all the muscles and ligaments. Of course, they sewed them back together again after he got all the parts back in. But until the knee healed, I didn't know where my foot was. I didn't have any sense of my foot's location.

How many of you look at your feet when you go up and down stairs? We don't have to because our proprioceptive sense tells us where our feet are in relationship to the stairs.

Piaget's Theory of Development
The Sensory-Motor Period

Movement

Piaget tells us that the only way children get information is through their senses and then he points out that the only way children can act on that information is through movement—both gross (large) and fine (small) motor movement. And that is how he came up with the title for the first period of life—**the sensory-motor period**

This first developmental stage goes from birth to about twenty-four months of life. Piaget says the children are learning by interacting with their environment through movement.

Stage 1. Reflexes

To review, the first month is the stage of **reflexes**. Many of these reflexes are designed, I think, to "suck you right in" to care for them. The little chubby cheeks that we love with these tiny babies are actually just extra fat pads that are used in

continued to page 8

Princeton
Center
Teacher
Education

AMS Certification Programs
- Infant and Toddler
- Early Childhood
- Elementary

MACTE Accredited

PCTE...the Inside Track
487 Cherry Valley Road
Princeton, New Jersey 08540
609-924-4594 • Fax: 609-924-2216

3b

The Learning TOWER™
Ages 2-6
Your home is the most important classroom
Share precious learning opportunities by raising your child's horizon with the safe, sturdy, secure Learning Tower®.
For brochure or to order
1-800-704-9058
Dr. Toy's 100 BEST Children's Products
www.littlepartners.com

Montessori
Infants and Toddlers Videos

Infant/Toddler Environments:
Actual video of three different classroom environments. Emphasis is placed on aesthetic and well developed environments. *Approx. 30 min. $50.00*

Infant/Toddler Activities
Actual video of children interacting with their environments. Explore new ideas. Watch how children respond. *Approx. 35 min. $40.00*

Montessori Infant and Toddler Care
Filmed at several programs around the country. Emphasizes Montessori theory and practice. *Approx. 9 min. $40.00*

A Helping Hand
Actual video of ways adults can assist children. Give just the necessary help. *$20.00*

Each video contains a brief description of its contents.

Send your order with payment to:
Infants and Toddlers Videos
c/o Virginia Varga
6106 Frederick Road
Dayton, OH 45414

A PIAGET PRIMER

continued from page 7

the sucking process. But that is not what we think about them. We think, "Ooh," and we can hardly keep our fingers off of them. They are just so wonderful.

That social smile of the child is yet another of the child's "suck 'em in" behavior. Some researchers say that that smiles can appear within twenty-four hours after birth and it isn't always gas.

Stage 2. Primary Circular Reactions

Babies at two months begin to lose these early reflex reactions and begin to gain some voluntary control of their muscles. They begin stage two—two to four months. This is the stage of **primary circular reactions.**

Primary circular reactions simply explain how children learn through their interaction with their environment in finding out what their bodies can do. Babies move their arms and their legs in apparently random ways for about a month or so. Then, all of a sudden, babies discover their own hand and begin to control the hand's movement into their mouths. "Ah, that feels funny. I like it! Ooh, it's out there again. I can do this again!" So, in this period of time, the infant learns about his or her own body.

They learn things they can do with their mouths. We hear wonderful sounds. "Coo, coo. Where is that coming from? I did it. I made the sound. This is fun." They learn to experiment with sounds. You will hear babies, all by themselves, making these sounds.

And, if you will notice, they lift their chins a little when they make these sounds. That is physiological and related to physical development that happens as they move into the next stage.

Tiny babies sometimes seem to have no neck at all. At about four to five months, the baby's neck starts to lengthen. During the first months, the structures in the neck are very close together and the opening to the lungs is protected so that the baby will not get food down the wrong opening.

This makes it difficult for the baby to breathe through the mouth. For this reason, a tiny baby with a cold and a stopped up nose is very miserable. As the neck begins to lengthen, these structures move farther apart and now the baby can control the flow of air better and, thus, make more sounds.

Primary circular reactions simply means one reaction leads to another and the child repeats movements again and again—with just his or her body.

Stage 3. Secondary Circular Reactions

At four to eight months, we have **secondary circular reactions.** This simply means that the baby interacts with his environment with objects outside his body. While his hand is batting around, it hits something—maybe a mobile. A little bit later, the baby may hit the mobile with his hand open. Maybe a little later, when he hits the mobile with his hand open, he can grab it.

Or the baby may kick and hit the mobile. We have a video that shows an infant lying on his back with a ball suspended over his feet so he can kick it. I thought that was wonderful! We need to think of things like this. Babies need this kind of opportunity.

So what is a baby four to six months doing physically? Rolling over

continued to page 13

Young Children and War

By P. Donohue Shortridge

Young children need to be protected from frightening events and it is the parents job to do so. Parents may understandably be very concerned about the attack on America, but they must put the needs of their young children first.

Children under six years old should be shielded from media representations of violence of any kind. This means television, first and foremost, but also the radio. Keep these media turned off when your young children are present.

Consider the Following:

1. What is Real

Young children cannot tell the difference between what is real and what is not. Although the events in America as of September 11, 2001 are real enough, the representations of them on television are not. Children do not understand that each time the explosions are shown on television, they are a repeat of a singular event. To a young child, this event is happening again now in real time. This traumatizes children because the event happens over and over again. It is anew each time that they witness it.

2. Time and Distance

Young children do not understand time or distance. Scenes of death and destruction are imprinting on the child each time he or she witnesses them and television's tendency to repeat the episode creates in children a reality that explosions are happening with great frequency. They do not know where New York or Washington is located in relation to where they are. To them explosions are happening everywhere and anywhere.

3. Cause and Effect

Young children do not understand cause and effect. Their magical thinking includes thoughts that they somehow may be responsible for these terrible events. Telling them otherwise cannot alter this thinking because their thinking is not yet rational.

Parents may be understandably very concerned about the attack on America, but they must put the needs of their young children first.

4. Routines

Young children are extremely sensitive to their routines. If the parents or caregivers are preoccupied with events on television, especially if they usually are not, children may become upset due to the disruption in their routines. If the adults are less available to them, children may also become upset. Further, children may conclude that your distraction has to do with them and act out accordingly.

5. The Adult's State of Mind

Young children are extremely sensitive to their parents' state of mind. Children discern your anxiety and become anxious themselves. Limit your telephone conversations and other adult conversations about the attacks to times when children are not present. If others broach the subject in the presence of children, it is your responsibility to terminate that subject immediately. You can gently say, "This is a subject better left for another time."

You would do anything to shield you child from an actual physical assault. Consider the media representations of war analogous to a physical assault in its effect. Shield your child just as ardently.

Resume

Donohue Shortridge is a Montessorian trained in Infant/Toddler Early Childhood. She works with individuals, families and schools. Donohue teaches Montessori philosophy at the Montessori Education Center of the Rockies. Visit Donohue's website at http://www.pdonohueshortridge.com/

Shorty Shelf

The Shorty Shelf fits into your environment in spaces too short for standard length shelving. Solid hardwood sides with light-colored Formica top and bottom shelves. 16" H x 22" L x 15" W. Price: $89.00 + $15.00 shipping.

Stand-Up Shelf

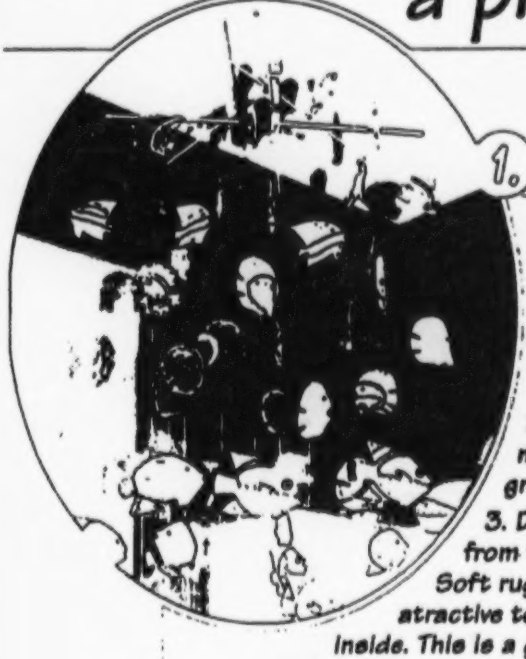
The Stand-Up Shelf provides an activity space on the top shelf. The lower shelf is set back to provide foot space. Solid hardwood sides with light-colored Formica top and bottom shelves. 16" H x 22" L x 17" W. Price: $89.00 + $15.00 shipping.

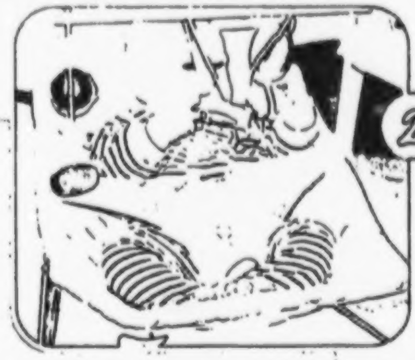
Send check or Visa, MasterCard or Discover information to:
Shelving
Infants and Toddlers
PO Box 146
Placitas, NM 87043-0147
Or call: 505-867-8033
fax: 505-867-1252

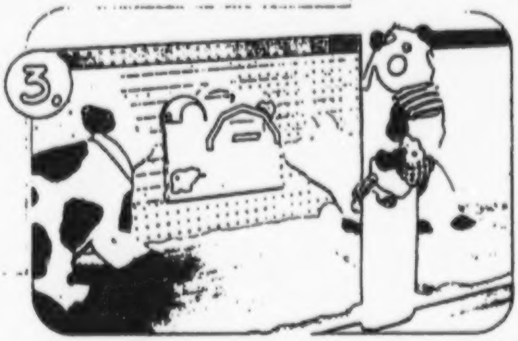
VISITING AN INFANT ENVIRON

a photo story

by Lillian L


1.


2.


3.

1. This large, colorful mobile hangs from the ceiling to attract the infants' attention.

2. Oh, boy, so much to study, grasp and play with.

3. Doors were removed from this low cabinet. Soft rugs were added and atractive toys were placed inside. This is a great place to crawl into and to explore.

4.

6.

There are so many things to explore! 4. 5. there are great toys for teething. 6. What fun it is to put the ball into the basket and take it out again.

5.

7. Soft books with a single picture and word on each page make interesting reading. Turning the pages requires it's own set of coordination skills

7.

MENT

eVault Kroenke

8. 9. 10. The youngest infants who can sit up are fed by a staff member. Older infants feed themselves with finger food. Notice the shoe covers used by the adults in the environment.

The Infant Program at the Montessori Country Day School in Houston, Texas, serves children from two months to eighteen months. The staff recognizes the importance of a loving, nurturing emotional environment as well as a clean, healthy physical environment for infants. They also know that infants have a very real need to learn.

They strive to provide as much as possible a home-like setting for the children. Classes are small, with a caregiver-child ratio of 1-3. The teachers model the gentle, thoughtful, intelligent behaviors that encourage similar socialization skills in the children.

Michelle Battistone directs the Infant Program and Marge Ellison, the school founder, is the administrator. They can be reached at 713-520-0738 or by e-mail: mcds@hal-pc.org

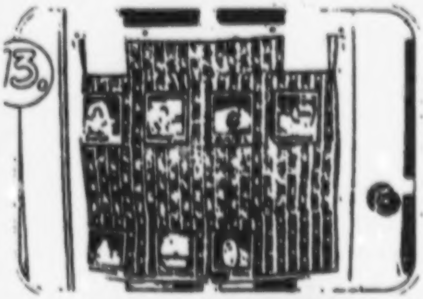
11. A gentle pat on the back is comforting at naptime. Children follow their own individual schedules for eating playing and sleeping.

12. Feeding time is comfortable as a staff member holds the infant and the bottle while gently rocking.

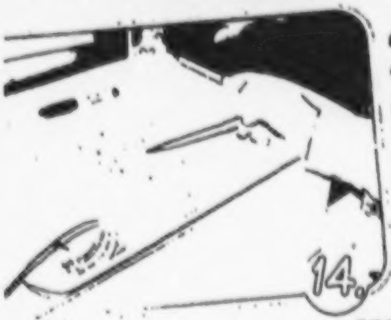
VISITING AN INFANT ENVIRONMENT

a photo story

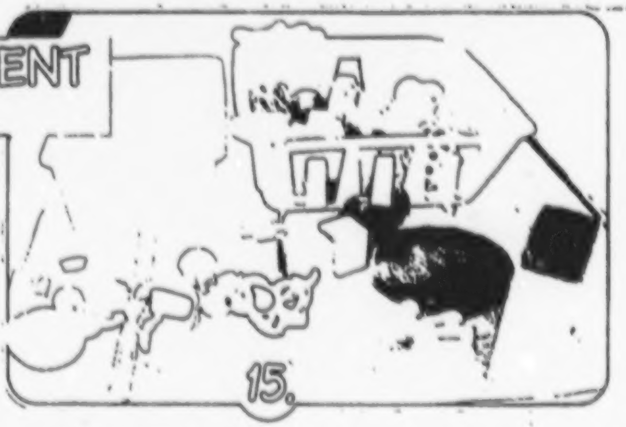
continued from 11



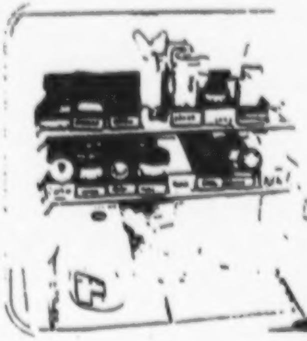
13.



14.



15.



16.

17.

13. Information for parents is placed in this colorful holder, which is hung on the entrance door to the classroom.

14. Daily records are kept for information from parents to staff and for staff communication to parents and other staff members.

15. Toys are sanitized after a child handles or mouths them.

16. Bottles and special foods are carefully labeled and refrigerated for each child.

17. This special use crib is large enough to contain all the children in the infant classroom at one time. Designed by administrator Marge Ellison, it provides a rapid exit in case of emergency.

QUESTIONS FOR SUSAN ABOUT DIAPERS AND TOILETING

1. ***What resources do you recommend for cloth diapers?***

   Little Red Robin, 52 Timberhill Drive
   Crystal Lake, IL 60014
   littleredrobin.com 815/477-4887
   fax: 815/477-8545

   The Natural Baby Company
   7835 Freedom Avenue NW, Suite 2
   North Canton, OH 44720-6907
   www.kidstuff.com 800/388-BABY

2. ***What other references do you suggest?***
   Farrisi, Theresa Rodriguez. Diaper Changes: The Complete Diapering Book and Resource Guide. Richland, PA: Homekeepers Publishing, 1997.

Letters to... the editor

September 15, 2001

Thank You...
to Susan Tracy for writing the definitive article on toilet teaching, and to Infants and Toddlers for printing it. This article will be a huge assistance to parents and caregivers alike!

Marti Bondelid
Oreland, PA

A PIAGET PRIMER

continued from page 8

and sitting up. In order to roll over and situp, the child needs to be on the floor.

I once observed an infant about five months old lying on her tummy in a large container, a wading pool with a rim around it. It was filled with toys. There was barely room for her body. She was crying and crying.

I told the caregiver that I thought the child really needed to be out on the floor. She told me that she felt she could not put her on the floor because there were so many big guys in the room who would run all over her. I suggested that she put the child on the floor right beside her so that she could protect the infant.

Once the baby had some room to move, she stopped crying immediately and got intensely busy pushing up with her arms. She finally flipped over on her back. If she could speak, she probably would have let out a cry, "YES!" You could see the expression on her face. She didn't rest in her glory. She started moving again, trying to flip over the other way. The main point here is that young children need to be free to move.

Pediatricians and people who work with small children are noticing much less crawling in some children. They think that it is because they are spending a lot of time on their backs. They are going to sleep on their backs because of SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome).

This change has greatly decreased the incidence of infant deaths since the campaign started. But, remember, children also need to spend quality tummy time to develop the upper muscular system because they are going to be using it to crawl, to pull up, to investigate and to do all the many things that they need to do.

None of the artificial containment devices, other than a car seat, that has made by adults that are good for a baby. You name one and I'll tell you why it is not good—walkers, swings, playpens. Babies need room to move.

My particular pet peeve is baby carriers. After all, if the baby is to get their idea of what the world is like when they go out with their parents, what kind of an idea of the world do they have if a moving view of the sky is all that they see?

When the baby is tiny, you can use a sling. Very quickly, he or she can graduate to a backpack. When you put a baby in one of these, the baby is thrilled with being upright. Artificial containment devices are just not good for our babies.

continued to page 14

Montessori Teacher Education Center of Northern California

INFANT TODDLER TRAINING

- ☐ Academic Year & Summer Course Schedule
- ☐ AMS Trained Staff
- ☐ Small Class Size
- ☐ On-site Environments

"Unless we adults are enlightened as to the way the child's mind develops, we are likely to become the greatest obstacle to his progress." Maria Montessori

Phone: 925-455-8021

Address: 460 North Livermore Avenue
Livermore, CA 94550

Website: www.montessoriteachereducation.org

Patricia Chambers, Director of Training

A PIAGET PRIMER

continued from page 13

It is very simple. Tell parents that they can save a lot of money. The other thing that is involved is that it makes them get involved with their children. They actually have to carry the child some places. What a concept!

This is also the age when infants are ready for the treasure basket with all those wonderful things in it. The treasure basket is designed for non-mobile babies who are sitting on their own. (Varga, 1998)

Remember that babies should stay on their backs until they can sit up on their own. Don't prop them with pillows. Don't prop them in a donut. Don't do anything like that because when you do, you are saying, "Okay, baby, I know that you are ready to sit up. Don't ask me how I know because I don't have any way to know." Now, does that really make any sense when we think about it? Who is the only one who knows when a baby is strong enough to sit up? The baby knows! And believe me, babies will do it—when they are strong enough to do it.

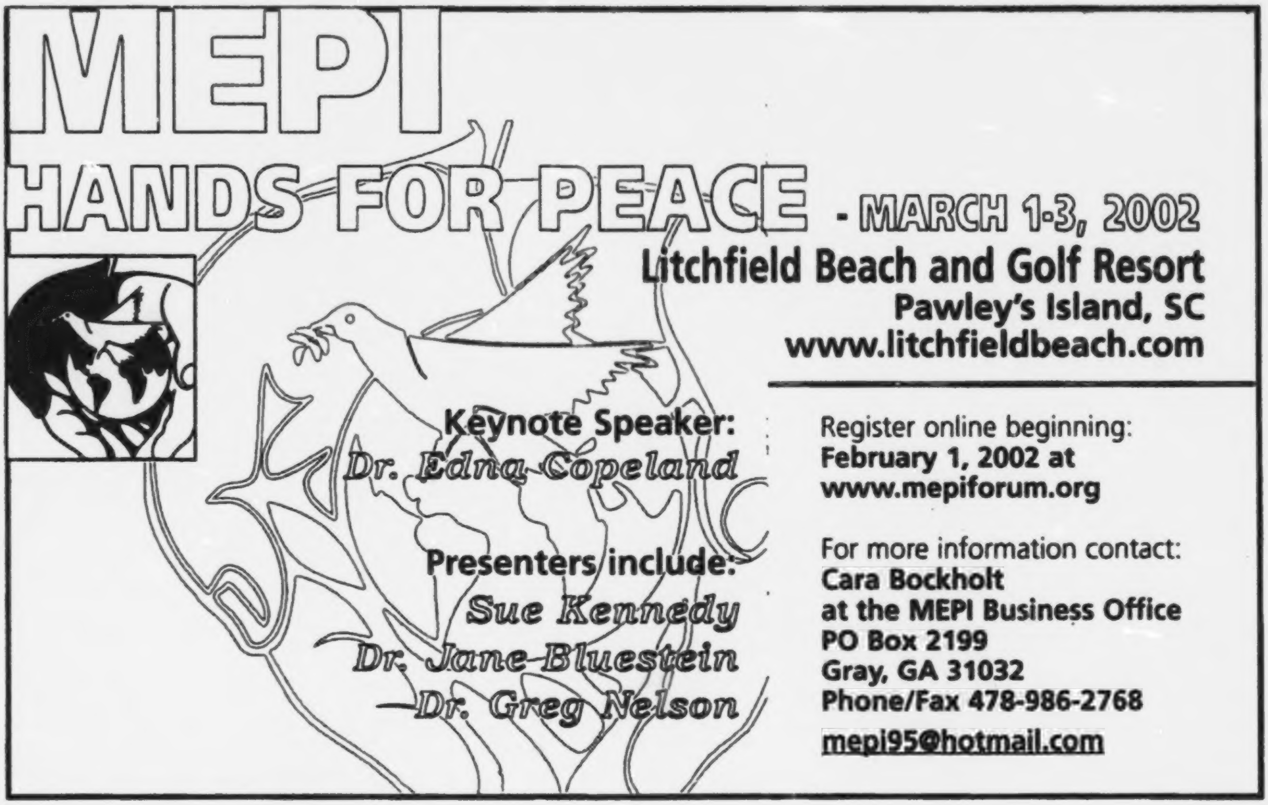
Some very informal research has been done with babies that have been allowed to sit up without help. Parents followed through with this behavior at home. When the researchers watched these children as toddlers and into the early childhood period, they found that these children had better posture than the other children. They seemed more balanced. They walked more smoothly and faster. They had been allowed to develop as only they "knew" they needed to.

Stage 4. The Coordination of Secondary Circular Reactions.

Next, we come to Piaget's third period between eight and twelve months, which he called **the coordination of secondary circular reactions.** This simply means that the children know some things to do with their bodies and they learn to put several of these actions together. They can crawl. If they see something over there, i.e., a truck, but there is a pillow in the way, they can push the pillow out of the way. They put together crawling with pushing in order to reach a goal.

Another thing Piaget says is that at this stage of life, children are beginning to have their own goals. They are beginning to think through, in very simple terms, ways to achieve goals. It is all very concrete, however. They are not yet thinking as we think.

In fact, they think that we think like they think. This is really true. Tom goes over and grabs John's truck



MEPI
HANDS FOR PEACE - MARCH 1-3, 2002
Litchfield Beach and Golf Resort
Pawley's Island, SC
www.litchfieldbeach.com

Keynote Speaker:
Dr. Edna Copeland

Presenters include:
Sue Kennedy
Dr. Jane Bluestein
Dr. Greg Nelson

Register online beginning:
February 1, 2002 at
www.mepiforum.org

For more information contact:
Cara Bockholt
at the MEPI Business Office
PO Box 2199
Gray, GA 31032
Phone/Fax 478-986-2768
mepi95@hotmail.com

and John screams. Tom looks at him like, "What's your problem? You knew I needed that truck. Besides that, it's mine anyway."

These are the toddler property laws: "If I have it, it's mine. If I ever had it, it's mine. If I ever thought about wanting it, it's mine. If I had it yesterday, it's mine. So you knew what I was thinking about." This kind of thinking really continues until about four.

Four-Year-Old Thinking

Research on thinking has been done with four-year-olds. The researcher calls a four-year-old over to a table to look at a box that looks as if it contains crayons and asked, "What do you think is in the box?" The child said, "Crayons." The researcher then opens the box and pulls out many beautiful ribbons and asks again, "What did you say was in the box?" The child now responds, "Ribbons." The child was perfectly serious because since he now knew it was ribbons, he always knew it was ribbons.

So the researcher put the ribbons back in the box and asked, "If we call your friend over here, what would he say is in the box?" "Ribbons." Because if I know its ribbons, he will also know it's ribbons.

This kind of thinking goes on past the three-year-old period and it's fascinating. We laugh because it is funny but we also have to realize that it is the child's view of the world. It's not our view of the world. It's an imperfect view of the world, but it's part of the process of developing their view of the world and moving them to a different way of thinking.

We have to allow for that. We don't laugh at the child and say, "Oh, no, that is so silly!" It's not silly. They are serious about just about everything they do because they have a drive that tells them, "I have all this stuff to learn and all this stuff to do—and now!"

PIAGET'S THEORY OF DEVELOPMENT

Stages	Approximate Time Period
The Sensory-Motor Period	
1. Reflexes	First month
2. Primary Circular Reactions	Second to eight months
3. The Coordination of Secondary Circular Reactions	Eighth to twelve months
4. Circular Reactions	Twelve to eighteen months
5. Invention of New Means Through Mental Combinations	Eighteen to twenty-four months
The Pre-Operational Period	
1. The Pre-Conceptual	Two to about seven years.

Stage 5. Tertiary Circular Reactions

A fifth period occurs between twelve to eighteen months, according to Piaget, which he calls simply **tertiary circular reactions.** Twelve to eighteen-month-olds are in a completely different space. They are beginning to use some of these millions and millions of connections that have been made in the brain. And they are starting to use them to do some very rudimentary reasoning, some very rudimentary logic. It's not our kind of logic but it is a form of logic.

The one danger that happens in this period, and the period following it, is that children are developing another stage of the sensitive period of language—spoken language.

Unfortunately, society at large seems to think that because children can now talk, immediately thinking, reasoning and logic adult-style is on board. In fact, developing these abilities has a long way to go.

According to Dr. Montessori, it takes children from their first intentional word at about twelve months until about three years of age to put all the parts together—all the nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions, inflections, nuance—everything that goes into speaking a language. That is a long time—two years.

Once reasoning starts to come on line during the latter part of this period, it's going to take every bit of two years. We've already discussed that process with four-year-olds who aren't there yet.

Stage 6. The Invention of New Means Through Mental Combinations

The stage from eighteen to twenty-four months is called **the invention of new means through mental combinations.** Brain research is verifying this beautifully. In other words, children of eighteen to twenty-four months are starting to put a lot of things together. They are studying cause and effect. They are leaving behind the trial-and-error process that they used between twelve to eighteen months. They are moving into thinking about things.

They are developing what we call symbolic or mental representation.

continued to page 16

A PIAGET PRIMER

continued from page 15

That means "Ah ha, I can think about my ball. I can't see it, but I can remember what it looks like." That's number one. "I can't see it, but I can remember where it is." That's number two. "I can't see it, but I can remember what I can do with it." That's number three.

So, all of a sudden, this toddler starts trekking off through the house looking for his ball because he has an urge to throw it. He knows that he can throw it if he can find it. And he knows he can find it because he knows what it looks like and he remembers where it is. He hasn't been able to do all that before.

Now, granted, there is some memory, there is some of all of this going on earlier, but the child is not able to pull all of the parts together and take action.

The Pre-Operational Period

Stage 1. The Pre-Conceptual Stage

The last stage of the sensory motor period ends at about twenty-four months. In the toddler classroom, this child is still with you for another year. These children are in what Piaget called the pre-operational period, which extends from two to about seven years of age.

In this period, Piaget classified the two to four-year-old as **pre-conceptual**. That doesn't mean that when children turn two, all of a sudden they are at this level. It is all a gradual process. These things don't happen instantly. They don't happen overnight. The child goes back and forth, back and forth.

Remember that even after the child reaches twenty-four months, sensory-motor activity is still important. As adults, we still learn through sensory motor activity. What I am saying about young children is that they are moving on to include a new level of development. They still do not think as we expect adults to think.

This reminds us that we need to learn everything we can about the unconscious absorbent mind. Our understanding is very sketchy because we aren't there any more. But that is where our youngest children are. If you don't remember anything else from this article, this is what I want you to remember. Observe, observe and observe! That is the only way you are going to know what is happening with these actively-learning children.

Piaget tells us that there is another big developmental leap up between

San Francisco Bay Area Montessori Teacher Education Center

Five Week Summer Schedule or
Intensive Year-Round Schedule
210 Academic Hours
540 Practicum Hours
Complete Infant and Toddler Manuals

American Montessori Society Affiliate
MACTE Accredited

Undergraduate and Graduate credit available
$2,000 Inclusive of Registration and Tuition

16492 Foothill Blvd
San Leandro, CA
94578-2107
Phone: 510.278.1115
www.MontessoriTEC-SF.com

five and seven because that is when children move into **the concrete operational period,** which goes from seven to twelve years.

The Role of the Infant/Toddler Caregiver

When your friends and relatives come along and tell you that you really don't need to know much to teach this age, just say, "If only you knew!" What we are studying are intangibles. You can't take a picture of it and write up an exercise about it to put in a notebook. These are phenomena you have to observe and try to understand in the life of a child.

That takes not only the knowledge that you have to do this, but also the skill with which you have to do it. That skill can only come one way—practice, practice, practice.

Some years ago, a lady wrote a book titled *How to Stimulate Your Toddler's Learning.* You don't have to do that at all. That is not our job. The children are taking care of that job and they do it very well. What is our job? Setting up the environment that allows this learning to happen.

What does a prepared environment for our children really mean? How do you conclude that you have prepared an adequate environment for your children when all you have to look at is your children? If you have prepared that kind of environment, the children are going to be so busy learning all their own stuff that what does that leave you with time to do? Observe, observe, observe. So you see, it all really works together.

There is another side of the equation of being an infant/toddler caregiver. You have to be a parent caregiver too because our ultimate job is to work ourselves out of a job. We can dream. Wouldn't it be nice if parents could stay home or have split shifts or whatever, so they can be with their babies? And I mean, really BE WITH their babies—not just pick them up at six o'clock in the afternoon, run by and get fast food, run home and eat it, throw in a load of wash, feed the dog, feed the cat, take care of a dozen other things, put the baby to bed and then start all over again the next day.

This is not being with your child. This is not being involved with your child. So, any way that we can get parents involved with their children means we are really doing our job.

Now, you know and I know that we are not going to work ourselves out of a job. This is the society that we live in. Nonetheless, one of our major goals is to reconnect our parents with their children. There is a short space of time here, mom and dad. You better take advantage of it. The dishes will always be there. The office will always be there. These babies won't. That's the way I feel about it.

continued to page 18

MONTESSORI SERVICES

A Resource for Families

We offer child-size, age-appropriate items for your child at home:

- Art
- Music
- Books
- Cooking
- Cleaning Up
- Woodworking
- Cooperative Games
- Nature & Gardening

Free Catalog

Toll Free: 1-877-975-3003
Ask for our Mini-Catalog
for Families.

Website: www.montessoriservices.com

A PIAGET PRIMER

continued from page 17

One of the joys I have as a field consultant is that I have the opportunity to go into a lot of classrooms and observe a lot of children. Believe me, I don't care how many years of experience you have, you will see things that you have never, ever seen before. And you will agree with Dr. Montessori that when we see the work of these children in constructing the self, we watch with awe and respect at what they are doing. Each one is the architect of his or her own life's plan.

I think, as infant toddler teachers, we are at the pinnacle—the peak of educational experience. And not only that, we are at the base. We encompass the whole of education just in the children we work with.
I really believe it. I really believe that you are the cream of the crop because of who you are working with. We are striving to find better ways to do it. My hat is off to you.

I want to leave you with a partial quote from Dr. Montessori. She says, "Little he cares for the knowledge of others." Where does that put us? In our place, I think. "...he wants to acquire knowledge of his own." It is only the knowledge that children acquire on their own that they possess in their whole body. If you remember this and work with children in accordance with it, then we have all come a long way.

Resources:

1. Montessori, Maria, The Absorbent Mind
2. Montessori, Maria, The Secret of Childhood
3. Varga, Virginia, The Treasure Basket, Infants and Toddlers, Vol. 2, No. 1, 1998

△△△△△△△

Moving? Changing your name or address?

Be sure to let us know as soon as possible. We don't want you to miss a single issue of your subscription. Send any change to:

Infants and Toddlers
PO Box 146
Placitas, NM 87043
or call **505-291-8022**
fax **505-291-1252**

o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o

Job Opportunities

Classified ads contain a maximum of 36 characters per line including each space between words. Ads must be placed by written correspondence to

Infants and Toddlers
PO Box 146
Placitas, NM 87043

and must be accompanied by payment of $8.00 per line. This price does not include a copy of the journal. Submit by July 1 for the Summer 2001 edition.

• ✂ •

Infants and Toddlers Subscription Form

Subscriber Information (Please Print):
Name ____
Address ____
____
City ____________________ State ____ Zip __________
Phone ___________________ Fax ____________________

Send this form and payment to:
Infants and Toddlers
PO Box 146
Placitas, NM 87043

Regular Subscription:
____ 1 year (4 issues) $25.00 ______
____ 2 years (8 issues) $45.00 ______
Intern Subscription:
____ 1 year (4 issues) $20.00 ______
Course: ______________ Year: ________
Bulk Mail Subscription: (School Orders Only)
______ copies x $2.50 x 4 = $ ______
Order Total $ ______
Please start with issue: Vol____ No____

Bulk Order Example (schools only): to order 10 copies:
10 copies (10 copy min) x $2.50 x 4 issues = $100.00

Form of Payment:
___ Check ___ VISA ___ MC ___ Discover
Account# ________ ________ ________ ________
Expires: ______ / ______
Cardholder (Please Print):
____
Signature: ____

Montessori Education Center of the Rockies
Infant and Toddler Training

"It is we who must go at his pace."
Maria Montessori, *The Absorbent Mind*

Intensive Study
Six weeks summer training
210 academic hours, plus
1 mid-winter seminar
9 month, 400 hour internship

Highly Qualified Staff
All AMS Infant and Toddler trained
Extensive Infant and Toddler experience

Individual Attention
Small class size
Personal approach

Observation/Interaction Opportunities
Model on-site Toddler environment

Inclusive Price
Tuition includes cost of academic,
practicum and seminar phases.
No extra fees for handouts or seminars.

National Recognition
MECR is one of the oldest AMS training centers,
founded in 1978,
with a national reputation for excellence.
AMS credential awarded.
Undergraduate and graduate credit available.
MECR is an AMS affiliate and MACTE accredited.

Inspirational Setting
MECR is located in Boulder, Colorado
at the foot of the magnificent Rocky Mountains.*

*Ask about our Pacific Northwest training.

Montessori Education Center of the Rockies **(303) 494-3002**
3300 Redstone Road Boulder, Colorado 80303
Virginia Hennes, Director
Sue Kennedy, Infant and Toddler Coordinator

Educating with excellence since 1978

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

these Infant and Toddler TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS have sponsored this issue

Center for Montessori Teacher Education/NY
785 Mamaroneck Avenue, White Plains, NY 10605
Carole Wolfe Korngold
914-948-2501 Fax 914-597-2779

Meca-Seton Teacher Training Program
5728 Virginia Street, Clarendon Hills, IL 60514
Anna P. Perry or Celma Perry
630-655-1066 Fax 630-654-0182
email: Meca 1 Seton@aol.com

Mid-America Montessori Teachers Training Institute
10730 Pacific Street, Suite 234, Omaha, NE 68114
LaVonne Plambeck, Director
402-393-1311 Fax 402-397-4958 www.montessori1.org

Montessori Associates, Inc.
P. O. Box 2319, Gray, Georgia 31032
478-986-1779 www.montessori-associates.com
Vonnie Fritze, Course Director
478-477-3722 email: JLFritze@aol.com

Montessori Education Center of the Rockies
3300 Redstone Road, Boulder, CO 80303
Virginia Hennes, Director
303-494-3002 Fax 303-494-6104

Montessori Teacher Education Center of Northern California
460 North Livermore Avenue, Livermore, CA 94550
Patricia Chambers or Mary Ellen Kordas
925-455-8021 www.montessoriteachereducation.org

Princeton Center for Teacher Education
487 Cherry Valley Road, Princeton, NJ 08540
Ginny Cusack, Director
609-924-4594 Fax 609-924-2216

San Francisco Bay Area Montessori Teacher Education Center
16492 Foothill Boulevard, San Leandro, CA 94578-2105
Pamela Zell Rigg, PhD
510-278-1115 Fax 510-278-1577
www.MontessoriTEP-SF.com

Infants and Toddlers

VOLUME 5, NUMBER 4

WINTER 2002

PS 030223

Become a CMTE/NY Infant and Toddler Specialist!

- Deepen your appreciation of the needs of children from birth to three.
- Develop skills to observe, understand and respect infants and toddlers.
- Discover the joy, satisfaction and profound value of assisting the very young in their healthy growth and development.

The CMTE/NY Montessori Infant and Toddler Program is professional training for people working with children from birth to thirty-six months of age. The first program in the United States to offer Infant and Toddler Montessori Certification, CMTE/NY provides an in-depth study in Infant and Toddler Montessori education combined with the most current scientific and psychological research available.

The first three years of life affect a child's ability to thrive and be; self esteem, the ability to form attachments and the establishment of basic trust are all central to this period. The importance of these first years places a great responsibility on the adults in the child's world. Parents and child care providers should be informed, knowledgeable, and well-qualified to assist in this crucial period of physical, emotional and cognitive development.

CMTE/NY's Infant and Toddler Program teaches how to create beautiful, safe and developmentally appropriate learning environments. The program will give you the skills needed to provide the best quality care for infants and toddlers, as well as enrich your own life with a deeper understanding of this remarkable stage of life.

Classes are held at the CMTE/NY summer institute in New Rochelle, New York. Year-round weekend classes are held in Adrian, Michigan. Observations are held at CMTE/NY's model child care center, the Montessori Children's Center at Burke in White Plains, New York and at St. Joseph Academy in Adrian, Michigan. Call us for information and a brochure.

Our CMTE/NY Infant and Toddler Care video is now available. Send $40.00 to ***order or call for your copy today.***

CMTE/NY **CALL: 914-948-2501**
785 Mamaroneck Avenue ❦ White Plains, New York 10605

Vol. 5, No. 4

Infants and Toddlers

Published 4 times a year.

The opinions expressed in *Infants and Toddlers* editorials, columns, and features are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the position of the magazine. Acceptance of advertising does not represent endorsement of any product or service.

Requests for permission to reprint materials from *Infants and Toddlers* in another form (e.g. book, newsletter, journal) should be sent in writing to Infants and Toddlers. Permission to reprint is not required if you want to make copies to share with parents, teacher, or students; for library reserve; or for personal use.

Our copyright notice must appear with each copy you make; Copyright 1997 by Infants and Toddlers. All rights reserved.

Send all address changes and inquires about subscriptions to Infants and Toddlers
PO Box 146
Placitas, NM 87043

Address all advertising inquiries and editorial correspondence to the editor:
Lillian DeVault Kroenke
PO Box 146
Placitas, NM 87043
Manuscript and photograph guidelines are available on request.

Printed by
Infants and Toddlers
Elanbe Publishing Services
PO Box 146
Placitas, NM 87043
Phone: (505) 867-8033
Fax: (505) 867-1252

All photos for the features were taken by Lillian Kroenke with permission from Montessori Country Day School, Houston, TX.

Front cover was provided by Eileen Bauermann.

Infants and Toddlers

FEATURES

5 **Developing a Sense of Community with Infants and Toddlers**
by Virginia Varga

9 **The Spiritual Transformation of the Adult**
by P. Donohue Shortridge

DEPARTMENTS

4 **Editorial**
My, My, How Time Flies

4 **Ask Ginny**
The 18-month-olds in my toddler class like to dump everything off the shelves and make a mess. How can you say these children are in the sensitive period for order?

Editor: Lillian DeVault Kroenke

Editorial Advisory Board:
Maria Gravel
Carole Korngold
Susan Tracy
Rita Messineo
David Shelton-Dodge
Virginia Varga

Editorial

My, My, How Time Flies

Has it been five years already? Wow! As they say, time flies when you are busy. As a matter of history, *Infants and Toddlers* was born in Rome, Italy, in 1996 at the Montessori International Conference sponsored by The Center for Montessori Education/New York and The Birth Center of Rome.

I was recently remarried and had retired from BFGoodrich Research in Ohio after fifteen years. I re-connected with several Montessorians who were interested in or had some experience with toddler programs as well as 3-to-6.

We all know only too well how busy Montessorians are. There is so much to do and those of us who are committed find opportunities for activity everywhere we turn.

It seemed to me that all the infant and toddler activity emerging in the United States should be recorded somehow, somewhere. There was, at the time, no Montessori publication that focused specifically on the birth-to-three period.

I verified this fact among the group and declared that it seemed time to begin recording the growing information and experience about infants and toddlers in the United States. Those around me agreed and responded, "Why don't you do it?"

I took the challenge and came out of retirement. I determined early on that I did not want to get involved in the politics of any single Montessori organization and that Montessorians as a group needed to share their vast knowledge and experience.

I approached the teacher educators in every organization asking for contributions and help to build a list of subscribers. I attended and displayed at as many conferences as I could. The first issue of *Infants and Toddlers* appeared in May, 1997. Slowly, we began to grow.

Through this effort, I have had the opportunity, once again, to contribute to the growth of Montessori awareness in the country and to meet many, many wonderful Montessorians.

Lillian DeVault Kroenke

Ask Ginny...

by Ginny Varga

Q The 18-month-olds in my toddler class like to dump everything off the shelves and make a mess. How can you say these children are in the sensitive period for order?

A Yes, it's true. Older infants and young toddlers seem to get great joy from taking everything off the shelves and leaving everything on the floor.

Children in this stage are not only in the sensitive period for order and movement, but also in the stage that Montessori called the unconscious absorbent mind—a time when all stimulus calls to them. They are attracted to everything. They are also very curious and love to explore all possibilities. They ask, "What is this? What can I do with it."

Dumping lends itself to all kinds of discoveries—the sounds that things make, how things fall and make piles, how to get your body over or around the piles, how to scatter everything with one hand or even with two hands.

Then there is the response of the other children and adults to add to the interest! Could it be that children are learning cause and effect?

I think their sensitivity to order is similar to the sensitive period for the development of language. There is a period of receptive language which is most important because it later results in expressive langugage. So, the older infant and the young toddler are in the receptive stage for order, which will later manifest itself in the expressive stage for order. Then the child will put things back on the shelf when they are finished. Then the child will contribute to the collective order of the class. Have faith. They will stop dumping things.

You can shorten this receptive stage by being observant. When the child begins to clear the shelf. Go to the child immeditately and try to draw his or her attention to the activity. When the child is finished, pick each item up and hand it to the child. Smile and gently say, "Back."

It may be necessary to walk with the child to the shelf. Children, who love to move and to be with you, will respond. This way they learn through experience what is expected of them as a member of a group.

It takes a combination of patience, understanding and trust in children's ability to learn, their growth in knowledge and their adaptation to the environment.

For future issues, please direct your questions to:

[redacted]

Developing a Sense of Community with Infants and Toddlers

by Virginia Varga

This topic presents a very interesting challenge. I had to do a lot of thinking about developing a sense of community among a group of children whose main psychic task is to develop their separate identities. It's a dilemma. How do you do that?

As I reflected on that process, I realized that it's a very dynamic and yet a very subtle process to build a sense of community among a group of toddlers and adults. The more I thought about it, the more I realized that helping children develop a sense of community is a key responsibility or function of the adult.

Recognizing the Infant's Experience

Regardless of how young we may receive a child into our program, that child has had many, many experiences before he or she comes to us. The child has had the experience within utero. The child has had the experience of the birth process. The child has had the experience of actual birth and that very important formative period right after birth of attachment and bonding.

These experiences all affect the child's developing personality. An infant who experiences acceptance and nurturing begins to form a foundation for the healthy development of the personality that will help the child—as he or she grows and develops and begins to relate to people— to begin to develop a sense of community, of sharing. It will affect the child's ability to begin to develop the feelings of community.

We can't just start with the child at eighteen months to three years. We really have to look at the child from the point of conception. Today we know that all those experiences help each child form relationships to the world.

Building a Strong Attachment

An infant, who has fallen in love with the parent, the mother or a primary caregiver and the world, will be better able to adjust to the give-and-take relationships experienced in group care—or the give-and-take relationships experienced in the home. Initial love and acceptance provides the formative experience for that child's developing personality.

> ***An infant, who has fallen in love with the parent, the mother or a primary caregiver and the world, will be better able to adjust to give-and-take relationships . . .***

So the child starts with a strong attachment, we hope, a firm attachment with a primary caregiver. Most often, it will be with the mother. We know that there can be other strong attachments but I would just like to focus on the mother. Mother substitutes can be the father or other primary caregivers. The child takes in this experience, and as I look at it, it's almost the first experience with community, that oneness with the mother.

A Symbiotic Relationship

In an attachment process, the mother and the child after birth develop what we call a symbiotic relationship. **Symbiosis** means that they are dependent on one another. Both parties in that symbiotic relationship experience some help to their own development.

The nursing baby helps the contraction of the mother's uterus. Nursing helps the production of the mother's milk if she is breastfeeding. Breastfeeding, in turn, helps to develop the child's immunities as well as the psychological attachment process to the mother. There are tremendous benefits to the skin-to-skin contact of the mother breastfeeding her child.

The First Experience of Community

And so, they become one. That is a community, in a sense, because they share the experience of being together and they each contribute to the well being of the other. I think that this initial experience lays, indirectly, the basis for the development of the sense of community. I don't believe we can teach community or a sense of community directly, probably at any age, but certainly not with infants and toddlers.

continued to page 6

DEVELOPING A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

continued from page 5

So, the child experiences, indirectly, a kind of experience which will be multiplied many, many times thoughout the opportunities presented in that child's lifetime.

We know that this close attachment with the mother or primary caregiver, this first community, this first symbiotic relationship that contributes to the health and welfare of the other person, only lasts a short time.

Developing Trust

Two things develop, we hope. The child develops a love affair with the mother, or with human beings, and also a love affair with the world. From that, we hope, the child develops a sense of trust.

As the child cries, the mother or primary caregiver responds appropriately to the cry. From this experience, an infant develops a sense of trust in himself as having the ability to communicate his needs. This is extremely important.

Chosing to be Active or Passive in Life

The child learns that he can be active in the world. It's a very early decision that he can have his needs met by communicating versus becoming passive and expecting other people to guess what he needs.

It there is inadequate bonding, the child will have a different personality. The child will not have that quality of trust in himself or in the world. There are many signs of inadequate bonding. The child is still seeking an attachment with somebody out there. The child continues to spend a lot of his or her energy trying to fulfill the need for attachment if it was not fulfilled at this early age. You see an expression of this need in the child's behavior.

As a result, if a child has inadequate bonding and attachment, he or she often does not have the energy or as much energy as the child who has had adequate bonding, to explore their world of things and objects—to make sense of the world. It affects the ability to learn.

Inadequate Bonding and Attachment

Some behaviors that one might observe from children who have inadequate bonding or attachment looks like hyperactive behavior because these children have more difficulty focusing in on a task that is immediately in front of them.

After the child has developed an attachment, depending on the quality and the development of the nervous sysem with the development of movement, the child moves from that love affair with the mother to what we say is a love affair with the world. The children are now very aware of the sight, sounds and all of the stimuli coming in to them.

Ginny Varga...

widely recognized as one of the leaders in the field of infant and toddler education, founded one of the first Montessori programs in the country at the Gloria Dei School, Dayton, OH following her AMI/AMS pre-primary training in 1961. Ginny has served as the Infant and Toddler Coordinator at the CMTE/NY since 1980, directing courses in New York and Hawaii.

Ginny has also been active at the national level as chair of the AMS Teacher's Section (1966-68), as a school consultant (since 1966), Regional Director of Consultation (1971-1973), a member of the AMS Teacher Education Committee and as a member of the AMS Board (1966-1977). For her many achievements, Ginny was chosen as the AMS Scholarship Committee's Living Legacy in 1993-94.

Moving Out Into the World

As the children begin to move, the environment has to call to them to become exploratory and interactive. This is important when you are working with infants or toddlers because that is how children learn.

Infants systematically and spontaneously move away from their mothers because they can now crawl over and see what that little red thing is over in the corner. The infant just experiences moving away or that mother has moved into another room. All of a sudden, that beacon of orientation is gone. The child either cries or crawls scrambling for the mother.

Developing Separateness and Self Identity

And so that process plays out over several months. Gradually, as the children realize that mother isn't in the room, but they are still okay, they develop a greater sense of their personal separateness.

And so, just as attachment and bonding is necessary for life, so is developing one's self identity, one's sense of self as a separate being. One can't stay indefinitely attached with an inner dependency with the mother. The infants begin to move away.

Through all their experiences, like crawling under things, standing up and bumping their head, children understand that they have physical boundaries and that they are separate.

Physiologically as well as psychologically, as infants develop digestive acids in the body enable them to take in solid food. We give them food at that time and we do not prolong the dependency of breastfeeding. Again, we support the fact that they are separate beings.

The Child's Psychological Birth

The child moves on into toddlerhood, and continues to develop, up to age 3, a clearer sense of self. We know some common behaviors of toddlers. They say, "My work!" if somebody takes it. I love the toddler's creed that says, "Anything I see is mine. If you have it and I had it before, it's mine." These are typical statements about the way the toddler views everything in the environment.

Children are trying to experience themselves. We call this their second birthday. They have had their physiological birth. During the toddler period, they experience their psychological birth when each child can say, "I am. I am a person. I am me."

Periods of Ambivalence

It's a very difficult period—this period from 18-months-to-3 years. It's a period of ambivalence. At one moment children are exploring their environment and experiencing great joy. In the next minute, they experience the loss of attachment, of oneness and love with the mother. They come running or crawling back. And very often, just about the time you pick them up, they look at you and "Uhh," they want down.

The toddler's ambivalence is symbolic of life's experiences which we revisit again and again. The experience of our relationship in marriage makes a great analogy to the toddler's struggle to develop a sense of self and freedom. As adults, we want the closeness and sharing of marriage, but we have to give up some of our freedom and sense of self.

Experiencing Loss and Anger

In periods of ambivalence caused by a sense of self, the mother and the toddler have a very similar experience. They experience loss so they often grieve. How many toddler mothers bring their children to you and go outside and cry? At one time, this occurred at the kindergarten level. Now it occurs earlier.

Certainly when mothers bring their infants or their toddlers, they experience loss and cry. When children experience loss, they also cry.

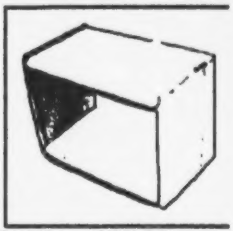
The toddler also experiences anger. Mothers eventually experience anger with toddlers because they don't know what the toddlers want. One minute they want this, the next minute they want that. It's all part of the process of developing their own sense of identity. It is a difficult period. Caring for toddlers in this state of separation takes a specially prepared teacher and a specially prepared environment.

Handling Negative Behavior

Coping with the child's ambivalence is very difficult in group care because we are responsible for the children's safety. Many times you know that you would like to not pay attention to this negative behavior

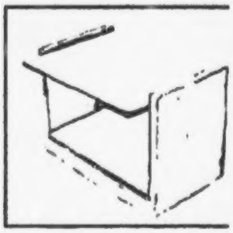
continued to page 8

Shorty Shelf



The Shorty Shelf fits into your environment in spaces too short for standard length shelving. Solid hardwood sides with light-colored Formica top and bottom shelves. 16" H x 22" L x 15" W. Price: $89.00 + $15.00 shipping.

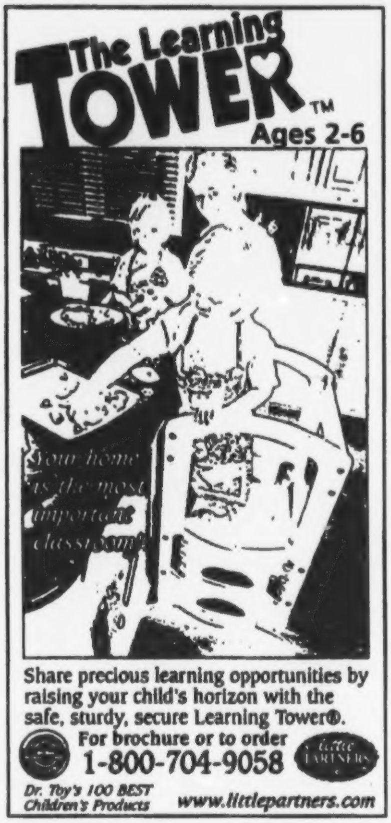
Stand-Up Shelf



The Stand-Up Shelf provides an activity space on the top shelf. The lower shelf is set back to provide foot space. Solid hardwood sides with light-colored Formica top and bottom shelves.16"Hx22"L x 17" W. Price: $89.00 + $15.00 shipping.

Send check or Visa, MasterCard or Discover information to:

Shelving
Infants and Toddlers
PO Box 146
Placitas, NM 87043-0147
Or call: 505-867-8033
fax: 505-867-1252


Your home is the most important classroom!

The Learning TOWER™
Ages 2-6

Share precious learning opportunities by raising your child's horizon with the safe, sturdy, secure Learning Tower®.
For brochure or to order
1-800-704-9058
Dr. Toy's 100 BEST Children's Products
www.littlepartners.com

Montessori Infants and Toddlers Videos

Infant/Toddler Environments:
Actual video of three different classroom environments. Emphasis is placed on aesthetic and well developed environments. *Approx. 30 min. $50.00*

Infant/Toddler Activities
Actual video of children interacting with their environments. Explore new ideas. Watch how children respond. *Approx. 35 min. $40.00*

Montessori Infant and Toddler Care
Filmed at several programs around the country. Emphasizes Montessori theory and practice. *Approx. 9 min. $40.00*

A Helping Hand
Actual video of ways adults can assist children. Give just the necessary help. *$20.00*

Each video contains a brief description of its contents.

Send your order with payment to:
Infants and Toddlers Videos
c/o Virginia Varga
6106 Frederick Road
Dayton, OH 45414

DEVELOPING A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

continued from page 7

but, on the other hand, if you don't, some other child who is in your care and who you are responsible for may get injured. It is very difficult.

The parent can play an important role in classroom behavior. Encourage a parent to overlook some of those negative behaviors at home where there aren't other children to injure.

Cause and Effect Relationships

The toddler is trying to understand how the world works and how these relationships with people work. Just as that creeping, crawling infant explored objects in the world for cause and effect, the toddler moves on to explore cause and effect relationships with other people. They start with objects and then people become more interesting.

I'll never forget the time in one of our toddler classes when we had a new little one come in. A lot of the children had turned two or two-and-a-half when we had an eighteen-month-old toddler walk in. He had very little language. He would first touch some activity of one child and that child went, "Ehhh." He observed intently. Then he went over and touched another child's activity and the child said, "Go 'way." Not very kind. Again he just looked.

The next day he came in and it was just as if he could press buttons at will. If this one squealed and if this one said, "Go 'way," the child smiled. It was wonderful. Cause and effect. It was predictable! He could trust this environment. He could also drive the teacher out of her mind. He just went around and pushed buttons, playing them like an organ.

Appropriate Teacher Assistance

The teacher was very wise. I think this behavior happened two or three times. She was observant. She just stood near the child he was coming toward and spoke to the child, "He is just a baby. He is just new. Don't yell. Don't scream. Just let him watch." She changed the behaviors of those few children. The 'game' being played by the younger child was now unpredictable. It wasn't fun any more. The teacher took away the expected effect. She moved in very quickly and didn't let it go on.

Averting Negative Patterns

When you are working with toddlers, you have to make some decisions fairly quickly because they imitate and they love cause and effect. So if there are negative behaviors or patterns—and toddlers love patterns—that you don't want to spread, you have to change the situations very quickly so that those patterns aren't reinforced.

With the toddler you can have various kinds of activities. I have a short tape that shows typical behaviors and interactions of toddlers.

A Teachers Most Important Function

Montessori said what the infant and the young toddler needs most in life—remember what she says in her writings—is what kind of an

continued to page 13

Based on a transcript of a group presentation.

The Spiritual Transformation of the Adult

Renewing and Refreshing the Adult; A Participative Exercise

By P. Donohue Shortridge

As they say in South Africa, "Sawu bona," which means "I see you. I greet you and I honor you." Now, I give you fair warning before you begin that this is a participative exercise.

Let's get down to work. First, pull out a large index card or an unused piece of paper, take a breath and come into your space.

This work is for you. Anything that you write or think or say will stay private with you. You don't have to share anything—unless you choose to. I invite you to be very frank.

First, Identify a Child

Think of a child who is in your realm, a child who you are either working with or your own child. This may be a child that you are in conflict with or one you have a misunderstanding with. Maybe when you say the name of this child, there is a little edge to it. Or you always talk about this child with your co-staff members. Or this is a child who, for some reason or other, you can't seem to connect with. Or this child may have been you when you were a child.

Right now take a moment to write down a scenario that you are having with this child. Describe the conflict or the situation between you and this child. Be as frank as you can because, again, no one else will see it. Describe this situation as if you are telling a third party.

Stop now to write. Begin reading again when you are finished.

Now put your writing away, but keep this scenario in mind. We will come back to it a little later.

Transforming Adults

Dr. Montessori wrote about the transformation of adults in her work and her writing. She saw the adult as an essential component in the Montessori approach to education. For if it is the child who is going to do the learning, what must the adult do? How must the adult be with the child?

One of my favorite new books, an old book but new to me, is Dr. Montessori's California Lectures from 1915. I find it new gold to mine. I like this quote: "The point is that the teacher must not learn a new method, but acquire new attitudes." She emphasized that we are not looking for the child, that is, what the child is doing on the surface. What we want to look at is what the child is doing underneath the surface that we see. She continues, "In order to see, it's necessary to have a special attitude and a separate interest within one's self that can see."

How are we going to see what is underneath the child when we cannot yet see ourselves? . . .

We must first create a new attitude within ourselves.

Creating a New Attitude

How are we going to see what is underneath the child when we cannot yet see ourselves? I think that this is what she was talking about with regard to what we adults must do. We must first create a new attitude within ourselves.

How do we do that? How do we become patient or maintain our patience? How are we able to observe—really observe? How are we able to rid ourselves of our old habits—the ones that are not working for us? How are we to understand what is really going on with the child? How are we to become congruent or stay congruent with our own authentic self? Perhaps Dr. Montessori thought changing our attitudes is an on-going process of inner preparation. That's what we are going to be working on in this exercise.

Inner Preparation – Silence and Reflection

Inner preparation, first of all, includes personal silence and reflective practices. Some of us are already working on this. Or maybe we used to practice these. Or maybe we would like to do these more. Let's turn our attention now to the practice of silence and reflection.

Dr. Montessori suggested that for us to be able to observe, we must be able to become still. "Another thing which we must learn is to be quiet. This is much more difficult than learning to talk. One learns it only after long practice. How many times does the impulse to talk at length come spontaneously?" She goes on, "Teaching is a work of inhibition, a work of the will, which is difficult to follow."

Another thing which we must learn is to be quiet. This is much more difficult than learning to talk. One learns it only after long practice.

Just as it is with the child, the purpose of silence within each of us

continued to page 10

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

continued from page 9

is to become aware of and to maintain a connection with our inner life. Is that easy to do? It depends on how our life is going right now, what kinds of situations we put ourselves in, and how we live our daily lives. Is that easy or not? We live in a very noisy culture, in case you haven't noticed. I try to find the quietest room in the place where I am, but I can still hear. There is noise around us all of the time.

Just as it is with the child, the purpose of silence within each of us is to become aware of and to maintain a connection with our inner life.

We especially notice a lot of noise in the summertime when windows of other automobiles near us are open. Or when our neighbors'doors are open. It all comes in to us.

The question is do you invite that sound into your world or does it just come in? Do you protest against the noise of our world or do you just accept it? Think about how noisy it is and what you can do about it.

Sometimes we place ourselves in these imposed noisy environments or we make the noise ourselves. How often is the television or the radio on? How much do you talk—and we Montessorians are talkers? How much outer noise are you making yourself as contrasted to how much you are living in your own inner space. Think a minute about your daily life and what percentage of your daily life is spent speaking or listening to the outside world, whether it is with another person or electronically mediated. And, how much of your day do you spend in your own personal silence?

Practicing Silence

We are going to practice silence right now. Put this article down. Put your feet flat on the floor. Take a breath. Relax your shoulders and when you are ready, close your eyes. Just breathe and stay with your silence until you are ready to come back to this space.

Stop now to practice silence.

How did that feel? Has it been a while since you isolated yourself in this manner? We rush and rush. Then we rush and rush some more. Researchers, who have recently studied cell phone usage, concur with Montessori that the ability to focus on what is going on in the present is impaired when we are talking. So, if we are really to observe our children, we need to find a way to be still.

If you don't practice silence in your daily life, now might be a good time to think about things that you can do to get started. First of all, whatever is on, turn it off for some part of your day. Sit and observe something lovely without doing anything else. Just find something lovely to look at for a few minutes. Or do some manual labor in silence. I like to get up very early in the morning when the sun is first coming up and bake bread. The smell and the feel of kneading the dough turn me inward.

Plan Time for Silence

Some people iron, some scrub. Do whatever it is that is a daily routine that you have to do anyway. Find a way to turn it into a Zen practice, if you will—a time of silence. Make a connection with nature. Go for a walk. Find a way to walk in nature. Make nature your friend. It's a great way to increase your observational skills as well as to be silent. Move at the pace that nature moves you, slow and contemplative.

Once again, Dr. Montessori tells us, "The teacher must learn this hard task of being patient and how to observe because the teacher must observe always."

Personal Inventories

Often the reason that we don't want to allow time for silence is that so many things we need to be working on come into our minds. That is what we will explore next—our rigorous personal inventories. We each have them. We continue to have them and they are ours and ours alone.

P. Donohue Shortridge

[illegible]

Once again, you will not be asked to share them—unless you choose to. It's essential—and we each know this, don't we—that we take a look at how we are personally doing. We have to check within ourselves.

Dr. Montessori reminds us, "We must divest ourselves, little by little, of the old habits, the old habits of acting a great deal and of talking much and of contenting ourselves with words, which can make us easily fall into delusion and error, that which leads us to that difficult and narrow path where we go to seek reality and truth in reality. This is to prepare ourselves for this new method. You are now initiated."

Reflection

We must find silence and then take a look into ourselves. We want to ask ourselves: Do any of my old, not very useful habits get in the way of my daily life and my work with children? Do I regularly prepare myself?

First, we want to look at our physical preparations:

- Am I getting the appropriate amount of rest?
- How is my nutrition?
- Am I drinking enough water?
- Am I getting some kind of exercise or physical release?
- Am I including these in my daily life?
- Am I living fully in my body?
- How am I treating my body?
- Am I considering my body as my temple and my tool to do what I need to do?

Now, let's look at our psychological life: What are my psychological barriers? What are my addictions? Addictions are distractions from my life.

The obvious addictions include:

- Alcohol
- Tobacco
- Caffeine
- Food when used as a drug
- Drugs

Anything done in excess to avoid dealing with an issue is an addiction.

- Am I too busy?
- Have I over-scheduled myself?

Women tend to do this. Men do too but women seem to think they can do it all—just one more thing that they have to crowd into today. Right?

- Do I have the TV, the radio or the Internet on all the time?
- How about shopping? Am I a shopping nut?
- Am I an incessant talker? You can't learn if you are talking.
- Do I fear change? Am I doing the same things over and over again, expecting a different outcome?
- Am I a workaholic? When I describe my life, can I say it in one sentence—"I work all the time."
- Is there anything else in my life? Is there a balance?

My husband sees life as a wheel. Every little piece of our life is a spoke. If you only have a few spokes in your wheel, your wheel is going to go plop, plop, plop. It is not going to revolve smoothly. Life as a wheel—a very lovely image. What are the spokes in your life?

- What things do I love? Am I doing them?
- Do I have a minute to myself everyday? Do I?
- Do I really have time for myself?
- Have I made time for myself into an art form?
- Do I consider it a scheduled item?
- Do I at least put it into my life everyday? Time for me—for my pleasure for whatever I need to do to refresh and to renew?

What about unhealthy relationships?

- Am I in a relationship that is no longer serving me?
- Is this person or these people helping me be the very best I can be?
- Is this relationship, whether it is personal or with friends, draining me?

Relationships within family can be tricky, but there is a way to work through them.

- Do I live in any kind of anger or rage or giving up from my past?
- Do I let these run my life?
- Do I find myself saying and feeling things that I wish I wasn't saying or feeling?

All these things are clues. Take a look at them.

How about my intellectual life?

- Am I ignoring it?
- Is it last in my priority list?
- Am I coasting or stagnating in my job?
- How long has it been since I've read Montessori's work—or somebody's or something that gives me a sense of excitement?
- Am I really renewing and refreshing myself?
- Do I have an intellectual life? It's important!

A rigorous personal inventory begs the questions, "Am I taking full responsibility for all of my actions?" Am I taking full responsibility for my life?"

Plan Time for Reflection

Find a way to review this rigorous personal inventory regularly in your life. But don't beat up on yourself every morning. That is not the point. The point is that each of us needs to take a look at ourselves and not be afraid to take a look. Look gently at yourself. Check in with yourself. See how you are doing.

Now is a good time to pause just a minute to reflect, to take in what I

continued to page 12

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

continued from page 11

have just presented to you. Close your eyes, find a calm space and ask yourself, "Am I really taking responsibility for my own actions?" Now with your eyes still closed, go back to the scenario that you wrote about earlier with that difficult child. See that situation from a calm place in your mind's eye. Take a look at the situation as if you are watching it from above the room or through a camera's eye.

Can you see clearly what it is that you are doing, how you are being, in that scenario. Then, when you are ready, come back to this space.

Stop now to reflect on the earlier scenario with the child you identified in your life.

Now, take out the index card or paper that you wrote your story on earlier. Flip it over to the other side. Write down just this sentence, "I am responsible for this conflict or misunderstanding because I..."

If you can finish that sentence right now, go ahead. I encourage you to finish this sentence now. If you are having trouble, you might want to go back to the exercise of personal silence and then to the personal inventories to see where the answer is.

If you can't seem to come to the reason why this conflict happens and what your responsibility is, I ask you to set yourself the task of not putting this card or paper away until you are able to finish this sentence.

Unmask Your Authentic Self

Personal inventories help me see how I might be masking my authentic self. The reflective practices allow me in that idle time and space that we each have to gather my energies, to reflect and to coalesce my body, my mind, my intellect and my spirit together. Just breathe into that space. Just feel that space for a few minutes.

Find Your Hidden Engegy

This is the last piece of this work. We also want to find a way to be present and bring forth that which is within each of us. Remember how it is when someone comes up to you and tickles you. You can't help it—you respond. Or remember how you feel when you are at the top of the first hill of a roller coaster. You cannot fail to respond. Find something in your life regularly that kicks that which is within you up and out because there is real powerful energy hidden inside that really wants to come out.

△△△△△△△△△△

Find something in your life regularly that kicks that which is within you up and out because there is real powerful energy hidden inside that really wants to come out.

▽▽▽▽▽▽▽▽▽▽

Find Your Spiritual Self

Find a way to get connected with that energy. There are so many ways to do it—hugging, holding someone, singing, dancing, laughing, enjoying intimate relations with your partner—some kind of joyous fun that allows you to find expression of your inner energies. Think what that might be for you. Ask yourself, "Do I experience that in my life?" If your answer is no, find a way!

I go to the amusement park every year for the sole purpose of going on the roller coaster. I don't do anything else, but I do go on it three times. It's great therapy! Aheoohll Whatever it is for you, find it! Do that thing or many of those things. This is your spiritual self, the inner you, who you really are, that wants expression!

We are often shy about our spiritual expression. "Well, you know, I can't be silly. I'm not expressive—for whatever reason. I have to be an adult." Well—no. Notice when you are expressive with the children. What happens? Do they love it? Yes! Are we up here and they are down there? No!

Be Present with Children

You want to find a way to be really present and, therefore, present with the children because that is who they are. They want you. No—they need you to be there and to be present. Some of these internal kick starts help us become present. Children need that. We need to be present with them.

Think of yourself as an airline passenger traveling with a young child. What do they tell you to do if the oxygen mask drops down? We must put our oxygen mask on first so we can be of service to the child. Can we be of service to any child if we are not stable and ready to act? No!

Being prepared and present is important and essential. It is not funny. It is not a side issue. These are the kinds of thing you must do regularly for yourself.

REFERENCES:

1. Montessori, Maria, *The Absorbent Mind*. Clio Press.
2. Montessori, Maria, *The California Lectures of Maria Montessori*. 1915: Collected speeches and writings, Clio Press, 1997.

DEVELOPING A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

continued from page 8

adult? What should the adult do? Observe. Well, always.

But Montessori also said, "What the child needs is an interpreter—an interpreter! I also think that a most important role of the infant or toddler care-giver is to be an interpreter. Children are trying to make sense of the world and they need some help. They need an interpreter.

They're developing language so the toddler teacher can, in her interpretation, again help develop calm and a sense of community by how she interprets for the children.

So the child, who is about ready to hit at someone because another child touched his or her activity or started to take it away, needs an interpreter to move over—to move in very quickly.

The interpreter needs to say to the child who has the object or whatever the upset is about, "Oh, Zachary wants to see what you're doing. He's going to watch." Then she should speak to Zachary, "Oh, you're watching." I always make watching active, like the verb that it is. It's an activity. It takes energy.

Toddlers will sometimes say, "I'm watching," with a certain amount of pride that they are not touching or whatever. That is the role of the adult as the interpreter for the child. "He likes what you are doing. He wants to watch."

To Think or Not to Think

One of the child's main tasks, the psychic task is—and my students here have heard this a hundred and one times—to make or not make a decision about thinking. A lot of people don't know this. The whole issue is to think—or not to think. Don't you think that's an important time in life?

It's extremely important because that is what separation and the individuation process is all about. "I am a person. I can think and solve problems—appropriate to my age."

If you are always there on top of the children at this age, thinking for them and doing for them, they can make the decision that "Hey, I don't have to think. I have such a loving, nurturing environment that everybody thinks for me. And not only that, they know what I am thinking. They know what I need and want. And they can decide for me. Hey, this is what the world is all about. Other people think and solve my problems."

continued to page 14

Montessori Teacher Education Center of Northern California

INFANT TODDLER TRAINING

☐ Academic Year & Summer Course Schedule
☐ AMS Trained Staff
☐ Small Class Size
☐ On-site Environments

"Unless we adults are enlightened as to the way the child's mind develops, we are likely to become the greatest obstacle to his progress." Maria Montessori

Phone: 925-455-8021
Address: 460 North Livermore Avenue
Livermore, CA 94550
Website: www.montessoriteachereducation.org

Patricia Chambers, *Director of Training*

ADEVELOPING A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

continued from page 13

The Separation Process

So part of separation is not just leaving mother and crying. Most people think—"How do we deal with the new child and both the mother and the child crying?" That is not it at all.

The separation process is the psychological birth of the child. The child makes an immature, early decision around whether he is the kind of person that can think and solve problems or whether he should delegate that responsibility to other people and become a more passive, non-assertive adult. The kinds of communication children experience are extremely important.

Thinking Takes Time

The number one reason that we need to work very slowly when we are working with toddlers, is to give them time to think and solve a problem. Now I don't mean here problems of conflict, necessarily. Many people say, "Well, children have to learn to solve their own problems and they stand back while children hit each other, bite each other and so on. I am not talking about that. I could but at the moment I want to be very clear, I am talking here about what happens when children are trying to do some kind of activity, such as trying to get their coat off or trying to zip their zipper. Don't move in too quickly to give them help.

Helping or Hindering?

I have a hard time with this because I observe this misplaced helpfulness in many schools, in many toddler and infant programs. I frequently

these Infant and Toddler TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS have sponsored this issue

Center for Montessori Teacher Education/NY
785 Mamaroneck Avenue
White Plains, NY 10605
Carole Wolfe Korngold
914-948-2501 Fax 914-597-2779

Meca-Seton Teacher Training Program
5728 Virginia Street, Clarendon Hills, IL 60514
Anna P. Perry or Celma Perry
630-655-1066 Fax 630-654-0182
email: Meca 1 Seton@aol.com

Mid-America Montessori Teachers Training Institute
10730 Pacific Street, Suite 234
Omaha, NE 68114
LaVonne Plambeck, Director
402-393-1311 Fax 402-397-4958
www.montessori1.org

Montessori Associates, Inc.
P. O. Box 2319, Gray, Georgia 31032
478-986-1779 www.montessori-associates.com
Vonnie Fritze, Course Director
478-477-3722 email: JLFritze@aol.com

Montessori Education Center of the Rockies
3300 Redstone Road, Boulder, CO 80303
Virginia Hennes, Director
303-494-3002 Fax 303-494-6104

Montessori Teacher Education Center of Northern California
460 North Livermore Avenue
Livermore, CA 94550
Patricia Chambers or Mary Ellen Kordas
925-455-8021
www.montessoriteachereducation.org

Princeton Center for Teacher Education
487 Cherry Valley Road, Princeton, NJ 08540
Ginny Cusack, Director
609-924-4594 Fax 609-924-2216

San Francisco Bay Area Montessori Teacher Education Center
16492 Foothill Boulevard
San Leandro, CA 94578-2105
Pamela Zell Rigg, PhD
510-278-1115 Fax 510-278-1577
www.MontessoriTEP-SF.com

see adults overhelping a child, with dressing and undressing—not giving the child time to do it or anything. Most times it's done with such nurturing and love and care that it's sort of a warm fuzzy for the child. It's so nice to see these adults so caring, but they are hindering, not helping the child's separation process.

Slow Down

The other part is still the dilemma of separation. It's like, "Oh, why don't they slow down and be observant of the child trying." The child moves much slower. His mind sends a message out to the hand to hold the zipper in a certain way. His physical reaction is much slower. Isn't that the fun of watching them think, watching them self correct, watching them change?

We have to move much more slowly so, if nothing else, the child has the time to do things for himself. That is very important because it is really supporting him where he is developmentally. By moving slowly, we help support the child's growing sense of personal identity. "I can do this. I am competent."

Real Self-Esteem

So we want children to experience things that help them develop competency and confidence in themselves. Most people talk about building self-esteem. I get tired of that word sometimes and how some people try directly to help a child develop self-esteem. Generally, it's through praise and reward, which for me is not the way to develop self-esteem. I prefer to let the children experience the fact that they are confident, competent and can help.

The Hidden Curriculum—The Preparation for Life

Several years ago I read the book, *School Home* written by Jane Martin, a philosopher on the East Coast. She picked up a book on Montessori. She had never been in a Montessori school and she said, "Oh, my goodness, Montessori is more important than ever."

Part of it is our emphasis on practical life. Jane Martin called it **domesticity.** Domesticity is the hidden curriculum of the home that prepares children for success. The hidden curriculum, she said, was first of all, that children had someone that would listen to them and secondly, that the child also had to listen.

Years ago when mother was home, she sent the child upstairs to get a box of tissues and to bring down a diaper for baby sister. The child had to carry that information in his memory. He had to think two commands and he had many, many experiences of listening, of paying attention and following through on directions.

The Importance of Watching

Jane Martin feels that the helping experience is missing today as well as the child watching the adult do many, many things. Watching is such a learning experience, watching how to become a human being, watching how to absorb the culture. Montessori says that absorbing his culture, understanding the times and learning his history is the main task of the child.

Watching is such a learning experience, watching how to become a human being, watching how to absorb the culture.

As I was checking one of my student's resource books, or albums as we used to call them, I noticed that she had included a wonderful handout on some research that had been done on a particular tribal community. Outsiders living in that country wondered why the tribal children were so calm and obedient. They decided that it was because the adults went about their business with the child carried on the back of the parent. The children were present to attend to the adult activity.

Teaching Indirectly

This research article also said that we don't have to teach directly or give the child a lot of direct attention. Montessori said the same thing. One of the many advantages of breast feeding is that the child goes into the market place with the mother, for example. The child is with the parent. This research showed how much children learn from watching. These tribal people went about their business. The children absorbed how it is to be an adult and learned how to do many things.

Building Confidence and Self-Esteem

I think that kind of experiencing also gives the child confidence and self-esteem. When they have to do something, they have already seen it done. That's an important step in learning. I am a terrible

continued to page 16

DEVELOPING A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

continued from page 15

cook. If you give me a recipe, I can't do it. You have to show me. If I've seen someone do something, prepare something, and then you give me the recipe, I can follow it.

I think that this is very much the way a child learns as well. They have to see. In school they have to see the adult staff getting along, sharing, talking to one another, and respecting one another. The kinds of energies that go between the adults are also absorbed by the toddler.

Modeling a Sense of Community

Developing a sense of community is a developmental process. It cannot be directly taught to toddlers. We can help the child process by reinforcing and celebrating the child's growing sense of self. We have to start there. We have to protect his right to possess things. We have to provide psychologically an accepting environment. Physically, we have to provide a well-ordered and consistent environment because it is out of the order and the consistency in the environment that the child develops trust and predictability. And that is extremely important!

Maintaining Order and Consistency

I am going to get up on my soap box here. I think that order and consistency is extremely difficult to achieve in our schools today. All the literature and all the magazines say that you should have an open door, that parents and people should be able to walk into your program at any time. I see that occurring in most programs. People come and go in the toddler class, walking through and so on. These interruptions take away from the order and the consistency that the toddler needs.

Maintaining Close Relationships with Adults

For the toddler the close relationship—not attachment—to the care-giver is important so they can communicate and get to know one another. It is difficult today because of the long hours that we care for children. It is difficult to have the same primary care-givers, or primary teachers over so many hours. We have changing staff even without opening our doors to people off the street.

San Francisco Bay Area Montessori Teacher Education Center

Five Week Summer Schedule or
Intensive Year-Round Schedule
210 Academic Hours
540 Practicum Hours
Complete Infant and Toddler Manuals

American Montessori Society Affiliate
MACTE Accredited

Undergraduate and Graduate credit available
$2,000 inclusive of Registration and Tuition

16492 Foothill Blvd
San Leandro, CA
94578-2107
Phone: 510.278.1115
www.MontessoriTEC-SF.com

In the course of a day the child generally has to relate to many individuals. The child experiences many different people caring for him and communicating with him and helping to model for him what the world is like.

Of course, that gives the child many options for models. Nonetheless, we have to do our best in our particular programs to limit the number of people that the child has to communicate or to interact with in order to be understood. That still leaves a large number of people interactions every day.

Allowing Children to Experience Daily Life

We can help children develop a strong sense of self and confidence through learning how to do things, especially taking care of themselves and participating in self-care activities. We are laying the foundation for the possibility that children will form very healthy sharing relationships with their peers and with all other human beings.

I really didn't finish talking about Jane Martin's book. What we in Montessori try to do and what I am trying to do is spread the word among those who work with infants as well as toddlers. If you have children for long hours, think about the experiences that children once had at home. If you have, for instance, your own washing machine at your center, there is no reason why the toddlers, especially the early arrivals, can't help empty the washing machine.

Recently, I visited a school where a toddler loaded the dishwasher after snacks. Children can do these things. These are the tasks that at one time they would have observed the mother doing, that they would have done in the home. I think we should emphasize those kinds of experiences.

I once visited seven toddler environments in seven days. That was an interesting experience because it was a real immersion. It is a much different experience than when you visit one program a month. It is mind blowing. It's disorganizing because they are all, in a way, so different and yet there are certain patterns that are very, very similar.

In the particular programs that I observed, basically when lunch time came, the teachers set up all the lunch boxes, sometimes even emptying them, microwaving the lunches, putting them all out. When the children walked in, their lunches were all set up. In fact, one child wanted to go into the kitchen but the

continued to page 18

MONTESSORI SERVICES
A Resource for Families

We offer child-size, age-appropriate items for your child at home:

- Art
- Music
- Books
- Cooking
- Cleaning Up
- Woodworking
- Cooperative Games
- Nature & Gardening

Free Catalog

Toll Free: 1-877-975-3003
Ask for our Mini-Catalog
for Families.

Website: www.montessoriservices.com

DEVELOPING A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

continued from page 17

teachers had put up a gate. One of the teachers entertained the children with fingerplays in the living room.

It's like—wait a minute! You are missing the boat here. The children ought to be, if not participating in getting their lunch boxes and setting up their lunches, at least watching. Then, if the chance ever occurred that they could sneak through the gate, they could do it themselves.

The Advantage of a Longer Day

We have to realize that we have gone from an experience in the past, or at least I have, of having a school and toddlers for maybe two and one-half hours to full day programs. We also have to be aware, to be observant of the increased number of hours we now have. Our new task must be providing for many more aspects of the child's development.

The nice thing about a longer program is that a program can also become more like a home. In that sense, when children including toddlers set the table, they may take turns. Not all the children should come at one time. That would be pretty choatic. When a child takes a plate and a snack and then washes his own plate, or washes several dirty plates if you have a group, he is indirectly experiencing sharing in that responsibility.

The nice thing about a longer program is that a program can also become more like a home.

You don't have to interpret in any way. "Wouldn't it be nice for you to wash all the dishes today because this is your class?" You don't have to put that responsibility on the child because basically they want to do whatever they see the adults doing.

The Infant's Motivation

The infants like to have a sponge and wipe the table, but in no way are they doing it to help. That's not their motivation. Their motivation is out of the sensitive period for movement and to experience the sponge and the water and all that. I don't want to misinterpret these experiences. Yet the child who sponges in the same place fifteen times, while the rest of the table is unsponged or unclean, is still developing a sense of competency.

Training or Learning?

Montessori talked about the various levels of obediency. If the child consciously realizes that something needs to be sponged and assumes that responsibility, that's wonderful. But that's not what we are trying to educate children to do.

In closing, I'd like to say there is a difference between training and educating. Some people can train toddlers to do a lot of things. I can't, but some people can.

Summary

The primary object is to give toddlers experience so they can connect their own sense of trust in themselves to do things. We need to give those experiences which lay a foundation for developing a confidence in their abilities when the initial task of developing a sense of self is over. Then I think these experiences will help the children form a much closer sense of community.

Infants and Toddlers Subscription Form

Subscriber Information (Please Print):

Name______________________________

Address______________________________

City ____________ State____ Zip _______

Phone____________ Fax ____________

Send this form and payment to:
Infants and Toddlers
PO Box 146
Placitas, NM 87043

Regular Subscription:
____ 1 year (4 issues) $25.00 ______
____ 2 years (8 issues) $45.00 ______
Intern Subscription:
____ 1 year (4 issues) $20.00 ______
Course: __________ Year:______
Bulk Mail Subscription:(School Orders Only)
______ copies x $2.50 x 4 = $ ______
Order Total $ ______
Please start with issue: Vol____ No____

Bulk Order Example (schools only): to order 10 copies:
10 copies (10 copy min) x $2.50 x 4 issues = $100.00

Form of Payment:
___ Check ___ VISA ___ MC ___ Discover
Account#________ ________ ________ ________
Expires: _____ / _____
Cardholder (Please Print):
____
Signature:________________________

Montessori Education Center of the Rockies
Infant and Toddler Training

"It is we who must go at his pace."
Maria Montessori, *The Absorbent Mind*

Intensive Study
Six weeks summer training
210 academic hours, plus
1 mid-winter seminar
9 month, 400 hour internship

Highly Qualified Staff
All AMS Infant and Toddler trained
Extensive Infant and Toddler experience

Individual Attention
Small class size
Personal approach

Observation/Interaction Opportunities
Model on-site Toddler environment

Inclusive Price
Tuition includes cost of academic,
practicum and seminar phases.
No extra fees for handouts or seminars.

National Recognition
MECR is one of the oldest AMS training centers,
founded in 1978,
with a national reputation for excellence.
AMS credential awarded.
Undergraduate and graduate credit available.
MECR is an AMS affiliate and MACTE accredited.

Inspirational Setting
MECR is located in Boulder, Colorado
at the foot of the magnificent Rocky Mountains.*

*Ask about our Pacific Northwest training.

Montessori Education Center of the Rockies (303) 494-3002
3300 Redstone Road Boulder, Colorado 80303
Virginia Hennes, Director
Sue Kennedy, Infant and Toddler Coordinator

Educating with excellence since 1978

Mean
the World
to Him

If helping a child take on the world appeals to you, then you may be right for the Princeton center for Teacher Education (PCTE). Founded in 1989, PCTE trains adults to find and cultivate the maximum-potential in every child as the focus of its American Montessori Society (AMS) and MACTE accredited teacher education program. Its world-class facility within the Princeton Montessori School offers a hands-on learning experience by a highly trained and experienced faculty. PCTE graduates are certified AMS teachers of the Infant and Toddler, Early Childhood or Elementary level. But the world waits for no one, so hurry. ***Contact PCTE today.***

PCTE

Princeton Center for Teacher Education • www.pctemontessori.org

BEST COPY AVAILABLE